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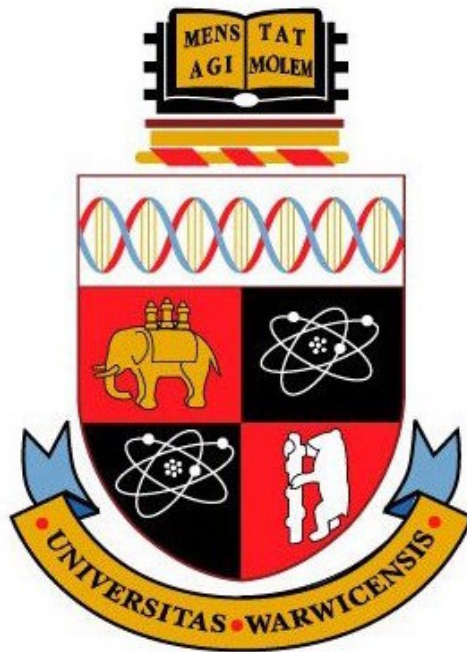
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Kinaesthetic Bodies in Contemporary Literature



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This dissertation is submitted for the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

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To my family.

DECLARATION

This thesis is submitted to the University of Warwick in support of the application for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy. It represents my own work and contains no materials that have been published or written by any other person. It has not been previously submitted, in part or whole, to any university or institution for any degree, diploma, or other qualification.

Jenny Wing Haang Mak

October 2018

ABSTRACT

This thesis examines contemporary literary texts in English from the Caribbean, South Korea, Nigeria, Japan, the U.S., the U.K., and India, and their representations of the embodied resistance practices of people who are marginalised under contemporary globalisation. It also draws upon a play, a film, and an art installation to support these readings. The thesis goes about this through four chapters, considering in sequence how, in these texts, these people enact their own agency and resistance through their bodies in the globalised contexts of new sexual politics, mediated war, technology, and neo-colonial development. It is attentive to how in each of these contexts and texts, the lived experiences of marginalised peoples are suppressed in various ways: by silencing, making invisible, technologically instrumentalising, and energetically exploiting their bodies.

The thesis reads these literary texts as registering bodies that are actively resisting their marginalisation. These texts represent these resistance practices through bodily kinaesthesia, which refers to a body which is sentient and which moves and engages with the world through a form of corporeal consciousness—the lived body. The thesis uses a methodology that takes the lived body as its starting point, which means that the literary text is analysed as a kind of testimony—taking the form of performance and event—that bears witness to marginalisation. Ultimately, by attending to literary representations of bodily kinaesthesia, we can understand how marginalised subjects account for their own particular lived experiences of a globalising world and begin to effect change in embodied ways.

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Introduction: Kinaesthetic Bodies in Contemporary Literature

This thesis examines a range of contemporary literary texts in English from the Caribbean, the U.S., the U.K., Nigeria, South Korea, Japan, and India, and their representations of the embodied resistance practices of people who are marginalised under contemporary globalisation. It also draws upon a play, a film, and an art installation to support these readings. It goes about this through four chapters, considering in sequence how, in these texts, bodies enact their own agency and resistance in the globalised contexts of new sexual politics, mediated war, technology, and neo-colonial development. Specifically, it is attentive to how in each of these contexts and texts, the lived experiences of marginalised peoples are suppressed in various ways: by silencing, making invisible, technologically instrumentalising, and energetically exploiting their bodies.

At the same time, this thesis reads these literary texts as registering bodies that actively resist their marginalisation. I read the evocation of these resistance practices through the concept of bodily kinaesthesia. By kinaesthesia, I refer to a body which is sentient and which moves and engages with the world through a form of corporeal consciousness.¹ In this sense, any perception of the world is not simply a cognitive process, in which thinking is separated from the body and located within the mind; rather, perception occurs through a ‘thinking’ body—in other words, the lived body.² For my methodology I thus take the lived body as its starting point. This means that the literary text is analysed as a kind of testimony—taking the form of performance and event—that bears witness to marginalisation. Ultimately by attending to literary representations of bodily kinaesthesia, we can understand how marginalised subjects account for their own particular lived experiences of a globalising world and begin to effect change in embodied ways.

¹ Lisa Blackman, *The Body: The Key Concepts* (Oxford and New York: Berg, 2008), p. 83.

² *Ibid.*, pp. 83-84.

THE LIVED EXPERIENCE OF CONTEMPORARY GLOBALISATION

It has been widely asserted that we live in an era of globalisation. This is where growing global processes in media and communications, technology, trade and investment, and travel, amongst others, have enhanced the sense of worldwide interconnectedness in contemporary social life.³ There are disagreements as to whether the spread of global relations is as transformational and new as proclamations of globalisation imply. But various thinkers have asserted that the quickening, deepening, and widening experience of globality or global consciousness that has risen from this worldwide social interconnectedness *is* of the contemporary moment.⁴ As Jan Aart Scholte notes, it is only since the middle of the twentieth century that globality has figured continually, comprehensively, and centrally in the lives of a large proportion of humanity, although the vocabulary of ‘globality’ and ‘globalization’ has only surfaced in recent times.⁵

This global consciousness has been described as the ‘growth of transplanetary—and [...] more particularly supraterritorial—connections between people’⁶ by Scholte. It has been characterised by David Harvey as ‘time-space compression’ whereby there have been ‘processes that so revolutionize the objective qualities of space and time that we are forced to alter, sometimes in quite radical ways, how we represent the world to ourselves’⁷. Roland Robertson describes it as the ‘compression of the world and the intensification of consciousness of the world as a whole’⁸. Underlying these various descriptions is the sense that contemporary global consciousness emerges in relation to changes in lived experiences of both time and space in various parts of the world—changes that are effected from the growing global processes that affect how more people across large distances become connected in more and different ways. Indeed, Scholte has noted that contemporary

³ See David Held et al., *Global Transformations: Politics, Economics and Culture* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1999); Jan Aart Scholte, *Globalization: a critical introduction*, 2nd edn (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005); Paul Hirst, Grahame Thompson, and Simon Bromley, *Globalization in Question*, 3rd edn (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2009).

⁴ See Held et al. for categories of the *hyperglobalizers*, the *sceptics*, and the *transformationalists*. Held et al., p. 2.

⁵ Scholte, pp. 118-19.

⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 59.

⁷ David Harvey, *The Condition of Postmodernity: An Enquiry into the Origins of Cultural Change* (Cambridge: Blackwell Publishers, 1989), p. 240.

⁸ Roland Robertson, *Globalization: Social Theory and Global Culture* (London: Sage, 1992), p. 8.

globalisation of recent decades has left almost no one and no locale on earth completely untouched, and the pace has progressively quickened with time.⁹

With the spread of globalisation in the contemporary era, one question that has been raised is whether globalisation makes the world more homogenous. This question might seem to answer itself—if certain processes, activities, and institutions become global, they eventually displace existing, locally variable activities and institutions.¹⁰ If there are more global linkages, global institutions, and global values, more people will presumably have more in common.¹¹ Commonality here refers to different people's similar lived experiences of a globalising world, despite their divergent geographical locations and cultural backgrounds. Globalising processes can thus be instruments of cultural homogenisation, which can have positive effects. These effects can be seen when universally applied in health care, food hygiene, educational provision, democratic public processes, cultural attitudes towards honesty, toleration, compassion, and so on.¹²

However, this understanding of globalisation neglects to consider the power dynamics underlying the intensification of these processes worldwide. Oftentimes, the imperialistic ambitions of nations, corporations, organisations, and other entities direct these processes—capitalism, colonialism, neo-colonialism, Westernisation, Americanisation, McDonaldisation, and so on—and destroy pre-existent cultures and local self-determination along the way. The material impact these global processes have on certain groups of people can be seen from how, for instance, unequal labour market opportunities for women persist, thus lessening their access to global spaces.¹⁵ Class stratification has meant that skilled workers have profited far more from globalisation than less trained workers.¹⁶ Indeed, contemporary globalisation has often gone hand in hand with marginalisation, as neoliberalist policies towards globalisation have in certain respects operated against women, people of colour, the disabled, and the elderly.¹⁷ As marginalisation is a process that limits and even excludes certain groups of people from equal opportunities and resources—in turn,

⁹ Scholte, p. 119.

¹⁰ Frank J. Lechner and John Boli, 'General Introduction', in *The Globalization Reader*, ed. by Frank J. Lechner and John Boli, 5th edn (Oxford: Wiley Blackwell, 2015), pp. 1-5 (p. 3).

¹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 3.

¹² John Tomlinson, 'Cultural Imperialism', in *The Globalization Reader*, pp. 366-75 (p. 372).

¹⁵ International Labour Organization (ILO), 'World Employment Social Outlook: Trends 2017', p. 8.

¹⁶ Scholte, p. 319.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 319.

shaping their lived experiences—this complicates the simple or straightforward idea of globalisation as a positive process of cultural homogenisation.

In my chapters, I consider four examples of different global processes as instruments of cultural homogenisation—heteronormativity, the ‘new media ecology’¹⁹ of war and its ‘age of universal comparison’²⁰, techno-utopianism, and neo-colonial development respectively. Through my readings, I show how these processes enact cultural homogenisation by their determination of the bodily behaviour or practices of people from various cultural sites. In doing so, I recognise that people’s bodily behaviour and practices shape their lived experiences of the world—this underlies my understanding of the kinaesthetic body. I will elaborate on what I am calling here ‘the kinaesthetic body’ in the next section.

Simultaneously, the literary texts show that people resist their marginalisation by asserting their particular lived experiences. I contend that the authors represent these people’s resistance practices through bodily kinaesthesia, whether it is via literary representations of the erotic, ‘eating’ body where flesh becomes food, the skin as a fleshy interface, the body-as-techne, or the body as a form of energy resource. This will also be elaborated upon in the next section.

THE KINAESTHETIC BODY IN GLOBALISATION

As mentioned previously, this thesis works from the understanding that people’s bodily behaviour and practices shape their lived experiences of a globalising world. Sociologists have recognised how the body or embodiment has become integral to the lived experience of contemporary globalisation. They refer to the ‘somatic turn’, whereby pervasive preoccupation with the body under globalisation has brought forth the need for renewed interrogation of the place of embodiment in social life.²² Bryan S. Turner put forward the claim that we live in a ‘somatic society’,

¹⁹ Andrew Hoskins and Ben O’Loughlin, *War and Media: The Emergence of Diffused War* (Cambridge: Polity, 2010), p. 2.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 18.

²² Philip Hancock et al., *The body, culture and society: An introduction* (Buckingham: Open University Press, 2000), p. 10. See also Simon J. Williams and Gillian Bendelow, *The Lived Body: Sociological themes, embodied issues* (London: Routledge, 2002).

‘within which major political and personal problems are both problematized within the body and expressed through it.’²³

Additionally, alongside the circulation of finance, capital, commodities, knowledge, information and cultural representations in the contemporary era, there are also complex circuits for the movement of people:

People—we could say ‘bodies’—move as knowledge workers, labourers, asylum seekers, soldiers and peacekeepers, diplomats and NGO workers, carers, spouses, surrogate parents and their children, adoptive parents and adoptees, sex workers and their clients, domestic workers, medical practitioners and their patients, academics and their students, aid workers and activists, tourists, guides and workers in hospitality industries.²⁴

Yet these circuits of moving bodies are underwritten by socioeconomic disparity. As Vera Mackie and Carolyn S. Stevens point out, the movement of people is highly regulated and opportunities for mobility are unequally distributed.²⁵

This thesis considers the body as it engages in its own practices that shape its experience of the world. Recalling the regulated and unequal movement of people across the globe, these are bodily practices that can be determined by globalisation and its processes in various ways. This is the sense of the lived body or the kinaesthetic body that I take as my starting point, as I examine its representation in contemporary literature. It follows Lisa Blackman’s own, which I draw on throughout this thesis:

The concept of the ‘lived body’ brings together a variety of different perspectives within body theory that start with our lived, subjective experience of corporeality. [...] Theorizing takes place ‘from lived bodies’ [...] and assumes that bodies are always ‘unfinished’ and in process. The focus is on *experience* and how we might account for the specificities of our material existence without presuming that materiality can be easily separated from social and cultural processes. There is also a key commitment [...] to refuse thinking the body in binary terms, such as the separation of the mind from the body [...]

One definition of the lived body [...] was that which focuses upon the ‘kinesthetic lived-bodily incorporation of the sense of the world’. The concept of kinesthesia refers to a body which is sentient and which moves and engages

²³ Bryan S. Turner, *The Body and Society: Explorations in Social Theory* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1996), p. 1.

²⁴ Vera Mackie and Carolyn S. Stevens, ‘Globalisation and Body Politics’, *Asian Studies Review*, 33.3 (2009), 257-73 (p. 258).

²⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 258-59.

with the world through a form of *corporeal consciousness*. In other words, perception (of the world) is not cognitive, whereby thinking is separated from the body and located within the mind, but rather occurs through a ‘thinking’ body, which is seen to have particular kinds of intelligences and competences [...] bodies are viewed as having the capacity for thinking and experiencing in ways that challenge Cartesian dualism—that is, a separation of mind from body. [...] One of the key focuses of this work is on *movement* rather than viewing the senses as fixed, interior processes marked by their location or place within the body.²⁶

Blackman’s observation that the kinaesthetic body allows us to ‘account for the specificities of our material existence without presuming that materiality can be easily separated from social and cultural processes’ makes the kinaesthetic body useful for understanding the relation between bodily practices and lived experiences of globalisation, while also being critically attentive to the power dynamics within global processes that construct these bodies, and vice versa.

In this thesis, I consider different forms of bodily kinaesthesia as they apply within different globalisation contexts and as they occur in different cultural sites. In each chapter, I analyse how people are marginalised through global processes and activities, as well as how they resist, through literary representations of kinaesthesia of the erotic, ‘eating’ body where flesh becomes food, the skin as a fleshy interface, the body-as-techne, and the body as a form of energy resource respectively and in a developing sequence. The argument and structure of the thesis works sequentially to allow each consequent reading to illuminate aspects of the previous chapter. Ultimately the whole will work towards a fuller understanding of how embodied resistance is enacted in globalisation.

For this purpose, this thesis also draws upon scholars whose sensibilities are aligned with bodily kinaesthesia, who have expertise on connecting the body to lived experiences of globalisation, in different contexts: Cherrie L. Moraga, Audre Lorde, Elspeth Probyn, Sara Ahmed and Jackie Stacey, Donna J. Haraway, N. Katherine Hayles, Sarah Whatley, Raymond Williams, and Barbara Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, amongst others. More critically, some of these scholars form the most appropriate range of scholarly and research relevance because they work in the disciplines of dance and performance studies. These disciplines focus entirely on the bodily aspect

²⁶ Blackman, pp. 83-84.

in and of itself, such as to offer an understanding of ‘movement from the inside’²⁷ by way of bodily-kinaesthetic intelligence. For example, the dancer integrates intention for movement with execution of movement that transcends thinking about such movement before performance—this requires a kind of intelligence.²⁸ Kinaesthetic intelligence, then, as a kind of ‘movement sense’, concerns the elaborate and intricate world that is comprised in the body itself. Sense organs respond to movements of the body, registering change of posture however small throughout the body and keeping it in alignment.²⁹

Blackman’s own understanding of the kinaesthetic body draws upon the work of Maxine Sheets-Johnstone, a philosopher and dancer. Sheets-Johnstone gives voice to bodily-kinaesthetic intelligence when she describes analysing movement ‘in terms of qualities’:

There is a qualitative aspect, spatially, temporally, and energetically with respect to movement. So, the analysis that I did had to do with the qualities of movement, with what I came to call, for example, the *tensional quality* of movement, the actual effort that is there, not the muscular contraction, but the effort—the weakness or strongness. In other words, it was an analysis of what is there in the movement itself³⁰

As I show in this thesis, understanding the dynamics of bodily-kinaesthetic intelligence in terms of the qualities within movement offers us an intimate sense of how resistance is enacted through bodies. Rendered in qualitative terms, bodily acts of resistance can be described as ‘*motor* decisions that challenge cultural meanings in profound ways’³¹.

As we live in a ‘somatic society’ where major political and personal problems are problematised within the body and expressed through it, this means that cultural conditioning has been inscribed on our muscles and bones, and that our acts are

²⁷ Ilene A. Serlin, ‘Book Review: Maxine Sheets-Johnstone: *The Primary of Movement—Expanded Second Edition (Advances in Consciousness Research)*’, *American Journal of Dance Therapy*, 35 (2013), 201-06 (p. 202).

²⁸ Donald Blumenfeld-Jones, ‘Bodily-Kinesthetic Intelligence and Dance Education: Critique, Revision, and Potentials for the Democratic Ideal’, *The Journal of Aesthetic Education*, 43.1 (2009), 59-76 (p. 61).

²⁹ John Martin, *The Dance in Theory* (Pennington, NJ: Princeton Book Company, 1989), p. 13.

³⁰ Gertrudis van de Vijver, ‘The Body: An Anthro-Phenomenological Viewpoint An Interview with Maxine Sheets-Johnstone’, *Psychoanalytische Perspectieven*, 40 (2000), 111-30 (p. 113).

³¹ Carrie Noland, *Agency and Embodiment: Performing Gestures/Producing Culture* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2009), p. 3.

learned and iterable.³² Most of us might not attend to our bodies and their movements in this way. We go about our daily routines without being aware of what our bodies are sensing as we perform them, or how our movements make others feel.³³ But to follow Carrie Noland, we sense ‘qualitative distinctions in tonicity’ through our bodily behaviour and practices, even as we become aware of the constructed and iterative nature of our acts.³⁴ This experience of differentiated movement qualities can inspire us to alter the rhythm, sequence, and meaning of our acts—to modify our bodily behaviour as a kind of motor decision.³⁵ The body as it modifies its behaviour and practices exemplifies ‘motor intentionality’—‘the dynamic engagement of the body in a specific context that invites subjects to effect change’.³⁶ It is this performance of ‘motor intentionality’ that—I contend—encompasses embodied resistance.

Each chapter presents and examines, respectively and in sequence, different examples of the modification of bodily behaviour and the ‘motor intentionality’ of resisting bodies within different globalisation and cultural contexts in contemporary literature. In the second chapter, for instance, we will see how Caribbean and South Korean women ‘eat’ the flesh of other bodies as erotic nourishment to resist their silent starvation under heteronormativity. But starvation does not only violently silence people; it can also mark the body in highly visible ways. To understand how globalising processes violently homogenise bodily practices and experiences in visible ways, particularly in a contemporary world very much shaped by and through media, as well as how people resist such determination, in the third chapter, we will see how Nigerian-Biafran and Japanese citizen soldiers ‘treat’ their skins—an organ that becomes a kind of fleshy interface between the body and the world—to resist how they are represented in global media amidst war.

As we think of the skin as an interface, we can consider the body’s role in the haptic technologies that shape our contemporary world. The increasing presence of artificially intelligent technologies we co-exist with suggests that as we live in increasingly ‘lively’, posthuman, global environments, our cyborgian bodies are being re-engineered to be more reliable in their functions and performance. To consider how

³² Noland, p. 6.

³³ *Ibid.*, p. 6.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 6.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 7.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 4.

such bodies-in-the-making resist being marginalised under global technological processes, in the fourth chapter, we will see how posthuman intelligent beings—presented in the bodily forms of the android and the clone—enact bodily unreliability under globalised techno-utopia.

These global techno-utopian processes of technological development involve colonising practices as well. Certain bodies become enslaved and are physically exploited to become resources for the elite. Technological machines have an intimate relation to both the human and natural resources that drive or energise them. To understand how people who are exploited in terms of their bodily energies and used up as human resources resist being marginalised under neo-colonial development, in the fifth chapter, we will see how Indian tribals and Martinican shantytown dwellers engage in alternative practices of ecological development that regenerate energy for their resistance.

These bodily practices might not always come across as resistance or as having agency. But to follow Erynn Masi de Casanova and Afshan Jafar, context matters for understanding embodied resistance:

Embodied actions may contain elements of both accommodation and resistance, these actions may be read differently in different contexts, and what feels liberating for one individual may not lead to more widespread resistance or change.³⁷

Where the question of resistance and agency seems contentious, I show how recognising the ‘motor intentionality’ of these bodies enables us to understand their practices *as* resistance.

Ultimately as a literary project, this thesis examines bodily practices of resistance against globalising processes as represented in contemporary literature. In the next section, I will address the relevance of contemporary literature in its representation of lived experiences of globalisation, its distinction from world literature, and its relationship to globalisation. I will also address my own reading practices including those for translated texts and for establishing the local context for each text.

³⁷ Erynn Masi de Casanova and Afshan Jahar, ‘The Body as a Site of Resistance’, in *The SAGE Handbook of Resistance*, ed. by David Courpasson and Steven Vallas (London: SAGE Publications, 2016), pp. 139-155 (pp. 140-41).

But before doing so, I would like to address why I have not followed the influential anthropologist Arjun Appadurai's approach, whose work seems to hinge on the same conceptual nodes as my own project. Appadurai is similarly concerned with the tension between processes of cultural homogenisation and cultural heterogenisation under globalisation.³⁸ He has proposed various contexts of globalisation through which to investigate this tension or 'disjuncture', namely five dimensions of global cultural flows that he has termed ethnoscaples, mediascaples, technoscaples, financescaples, and ideoscaples.³⁹ Some echo those explored in this thesis. In particular, his concept of 'ethnoscape'—'the landscape of persons who constitute the shifting world in which we live: tourists, immigrants, refugees, exiles, guest workers, and other moving groups and individuals constitute an essential feature of the world and appear to affect the politics of (and between) nations to a hitherto unprecedented degree'—is attentive to the moving body under globalisation and its political agency.⁴⁰

But this thesis takes the *experience* of the lived body as its starting point for understanding resistance. It differs from Appadurai, who asserts the centrality of *imagination* to all forms of agency—he calls the imagination 'a staging ground for action, and not only for escape'⁴¹. For Appadurai, these different global landscapes are 'imagined worlds'—'the multiple worlds that are constituted by the historically situated imaginations of persons and groups spread around the globe'.⁴² Resistance through imagination can be enacted in this way:

many persons on the globe live in such imagined worlds (and not just in imagined communities) and thus are able to contest and sometimes even subvert the imagined worlds of the official mind and of the entrepreneurial mentality that surround them.⁴³

³⁸ Arjun Appadurai, *Modernity at Large: Cultural Dimensions of Globalization* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1996), p. 32, p. 42. See also Arjun Appadurai, *Fear of Small Numbers: An Essay on the Geography of Anger* (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2006).

³⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 33, p. 43.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 33.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, p. 7, p. 31. See also Arjun Appadurai, *The Future as Cultural Fact: Essays on the Global Condition* (London and New York: Verso, 2013).

⁴² *Ibid.*, p. 33.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, p. 33.

Appadurai refers to mythologies, dreams, visions, fantasy, and so on, as forms of imagination for resistance.⁴⁴ He thus understands imagination as a mental faculty of forming new ideas, images, and concepts.⁴⁵ Therefore, even as Appadurai does situate the workings of imagination in relation to global circuits of moving bodies, and even as his reference to imagination is suggestive for literary analysis, his approach to resistance via the imagination differs from my starting point of the kinaesthetic body. My approach is alert to how bodily-kinaesthetic intelligence informs one's lived experience of the world and thus of one's acts of resistance.

CONTEMPORARY LITERATURE AND GLOBALISATION

Literature is an art form that has extensively tried to represent the body and its lived experience of the world. Contemporary literature remains a significant place where global consciousness is produced and represented, despite critics pointing out the diminished role that literature currently plays in the global imagination.⁴⁶ The lived experience of marginality under contemporary globalisation is also addressed, for example in postcolonial literary discourse. By 'contemporary literature', I follow Suman Gupta's definition: 'the literature of our time, or of the present'⁴⁷. This definition is attentive to the direct relevance of such literature to our lives and our world.⁴⁸

⁴⁴ Appadurai, *Modernity at Large: Cultural Dimensions of Globalization*, pp. 5-7.

⁴⁵ Appadurai's proposal of 'imagined worlds' extends Benedict Anderson's concept of the nation as an 'imagined community' on a global scale. Appadurai's understanding of imagination, then, follows Anderson's own. Anderson also views imagination as a form of mental work: 'It is *imagined* because the members of even the smallest nation will never know most of their fellow-members, meet them, or even hear of them, yet in the minds of each lives the image of their communion.' Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*, revised edn (London: Verso, 2006), p. 6.

⁴⁶ Susie O'Brien and Imre Szeman note that discussions of globalisation and culture rarely deal with literature, but focus instead on those mediums that transmit culture electronically, which are imagined as having an especially powerful and even determinate impact on social and individual identities: film, television, telecommunications, and the Internet. Susie O'Brien and Imre Szeman, 'Introduction: The Globalization of Fiction / the Fiction of Globalization', *South Atlantic Quarterly*, 100.3 (2001), 603-26 (p. 612). Sarah Brouillette and David Thomas also echo this sense of literary reading as a 'residual practice' in considering the contemporary circuits of production and consumption of literature. Barbara Harlow et al., 'First Responses', *Comparative Literature Studies*, 53.3 (2016), 505-34 (p. 511).

⁴⁷ Suman Gupta, *Contemporary Literature: The Basics* (Oxford: Routledge, 2012), p. 2.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 2.

As Gupta states, regarding contemporary literature:

We hope to find in it expressions and issues with which we are familiar. We anticipate resonances with our experiences, attitudes and concerns, as these have developed within our lifetimes and surface in our everyday lives.⁴⁹

Being attentive to how globalisation is represented within contemporary literature, then, allows us to understand how such literature is resonant with our current lived experiences of the world—reflecting the relationship between contemporary literature and globalisation. Indeed, globalisation has been a pervasive theme of contemporary literature. Nico Israel cites writers such as Salman Rushdie, Jeffrey Eugenides, W.G. Sebald, J. M. Coetzee, and Ben Okri whose works challenge literary and cultural critics to picture ‘life englobed’.⁵⁰ This pervasiveness reflects Gupta’s observation on the close relationship between contemporary literature and globalisation: ‘globalization is something that is happening out there, so to speak, characterizing the economic, social, political, cultural contemporary world. This cannot but be represented or reflected or constructed within literature and literary studies, themselves inevitably of the world.’⁵¹

Like this thesis, both Israel and Gupta are interested in how lived experiences of globalisation are represented within contemporary literature at the level of the literary text. Israel argues that those writers ‘shun the low-affect irony associated with postmodernism and convey the import of globalisation as both multilateral ethical conundrum and horizon of promise’⁵². Israel notes how Rushdie’s and Eugenides’ references to the fashion that adorns their characters—be it clothing or footwear—in their respective novels *The Satanic Verses* (1989) and *Middlesex* (2002) express tensions between local and global identities in a contemporary globalising world.⁵³

⁴⁹ Gupta recognises that reading literature from past periods—that is, before our time, or the historically defined past—also calls upon our present-day experiences and attitudes. But he argues that contemporary literature is read with a sense of being closer to us than literature from the past: ‘We feel that the literature that is written and appears in our time is more intimately connected with the complexity and messiness of our lives. It is in tune with how we speak and what we think about and observe.’ Gupta, *Contemporary Literature: The Basics*, pp. 2-3.

⁵⁰ Nico Israel, ‘Globalization and Contemporary Literature’, *Literature Compass*, 1.1 (2004), 1-5 (p. 4).

⁵¹ Suman Gupta, *Globalization and Literature* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2009), p. 11.

⁵² *Ibid.*, p. 4.

⁵³ Israel, p. 4.

Israel therefore highlights the pervasiveness of globalisation as a literary theme through ‘new forms of expression’⁵⁴ like the representation of fashion.

On his part, Gupta looks at literary representations of pro- and anti-globalisation movements, as well as those of people living in global cities like London and New York. He analyses contemporary North American and British novels such as Don DeLillo’s *Cosmopolis* (2003), Robert Newman’s *The Fountain at the Centre of the World* (2003), Ian McEwan’s *Saturday* (2006), and Gutam Malkani’s *Londonstani* (2006), amongst others.⁵⁵ Gupta argues that globalisation’s ‘protean nuances are represented and given flesh in literature most self-consciously where it has everyday currency, in contexts which constantly present themselves as centres of globalizing processes’⁵⁶. He states:

Contemporary North American and British literature [...] often describe various strands of everyday and social life that are symptomatic of globalization. These often deal with protagonists and events caught in the machine of multinational business, located in the confrontation of global political forces from above and below, placed in the cosmopolitan spaces of global cities or moving fluidly across national and cultural boundaries, etc. Such themes are naturally intermeshed with each other to convey something of a process that is ultimately uncontainable in any single narrative or descriptive effort.⁵⁷

Gupta therefore describes the ‘everyday currency’ of globalising processes as expressed in such literature through pro- and anti-globalisation movements, and daily life in global cities.

In these different ways, both critics suggest that literary texts’ representations of globality mark their contemporaneity, that is, their relevance to our everyday lived experiences of a globalising world. This thesis follows these critics’ specific understanding of the relationship between contemporary literature and globalisation. But I examine contemporary literary representations of *bodily* experiences of globalisation, which Israel does not consider and Gupta only briefly implies.⁵⁸ The texts I look at all represent the bodily experiences of those marginalised under

⁵⁴ Israel, pp. 4-5.

⁵⁵ Gupta, *Globalization and Literature*, pp. 13-61.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 13.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 13.

⁵⁸ Gupta briefly reflects on how a character’s bodily resistance against the effects of tear gas during an anti-globalisation protest in Newman’s novel *The Fountain at the Centre of the World* enforces the sense of global violence by the establishment. *Ibid.*, p. 22.

globalisation—of being ‘starved’ of their sexual appetites under heteronormativity, of being ‘invisible’ amid the mediatisation of war, of being engineered to be ‘reliable’ in their functions under techno-utopianism, and of being ‘wasted’ in terms of their energy and ‘dislocated’ under neo-colonial development.

Unlike Gupta, I also analyse literature from different cultural locations—the Caribbean, South Korea, Nigeria, Japan, the U.S, the U.K., and India. Globalising processes do not have ‘everyday currency’ only in the U.S. and the U.K.. This gives us a fuller picture of the situation, exemplifying these texts’ relevance and contemporaneity. Simultaneously, I am mindful of the local specificity of resistances portrayed in individual texts. I establish the local context of each text by providing extensive background information.

In the second chapter, I give background information on heteronormativity in relation to Caribbean-English-American and East Asian (the Koreas-Japan-China-Mongolia) colonialism and neo-colonialism. This offers cultural context to how sexual desires are construed and resisted. To subsequently understand how bodies in war resist their violent mediation with cultural specificity, I discuss the mediatisation of the 1967 Nigeria-Biafra war and that of post-WWII Japan in relation to Japanese nationalism, neo-nationalism, and post-war economic development. To get a sense of how post-war, technologised bodies resist their instrumentalisation, I discuss techno-utopianism in relation to post-WWII and modern-day America in the fourth chapter. To finally understand how postcolonial bodies resist their economic exploitation, I discuss development in relation to Indian-British-American and Martinican-French-American neo-colonialism in the fifth chapter. For the fifth chapter, I have also provided relevant background information on the specific cultural practices of resistance enacted by the tribals of India and by the maroons of the Black Atlantic, as well as on the related concepts of *Créolité* and creolisation. I will address further implications in the Conclusion.

These texts’ contemporary relevance to the lived experience of globalisation at different cultural sites is not just tied to their represented content. Literature, itself ‘inevitably of the world’, is also constructed by globalisation. That is to say, globalising processes influence the way literature circulates. This, in turn, affects the contemporaneity and everyday relevance of these texts to global readers.

Today, a popular novel reaches readers more widely and quickly than was likely a few decades back, in relation to the workings of the literary industry.⁵⁹ Being translated, read, and assimilated within various linguistic and national contexts, the novel becomes part of a broad sense of the contemporary for readers living in different parts of the world.⁶⁰ Considering various literary works as they are globally circulated today, in conjunction with their translations and other material forms in which they appear—film, theatre, electronic texts, and so on—also in relation to the power dynamics involved in literary production processes, we can conceptualise an ‘international literary space’⁶¹ within which the contemporaneity of a literary text is determined. This international literary space has its own present. It is a literary measure of time that Pascale Casanova has termed the ‘literary Greenwich meridian’, by which a text’s contemporaneity can be determined:

the literary meridian allows us to gauge the distance from the centre of the protagonists within literary space. It is the place where the measurement of literary time—that is, the assessment of aesthetic modernity—is crystallized, contested, elaborated. What is considered modern here, at a given moment, will be declared to be the ‘present’: texts that will ‘make their mark’, capable of modifying the current aesthetic norms. These works will serve, for a time at least, as the units of measurement within a specific chronology, models of comparison for subsequent productions.⁶²

I have selected literary texts that have ‘made their mark’ in contemporary global consciousness through numerous ways that reflect the workings of this international literary space—gaining global recognition through prestigious awards, translations, and by being adapted into film. Awards include the Man Booker Prize (Kazuo Ishiguro’s *Never Let Me Go* (2005) shortlisted; Han Kang’s *The Vegetarian* (2015) won), the French Prix Goncourt (Patrick Chamoiseau’s *Texaco* (1998)), the U.K. Women’s Prize for Fiction (Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie’s *Half of a Yellow Sun* (2007)), and Japan’s Yomiuri Literary Award (Haruki Murakami’s *The Wind-Up Bird Chronicle* (1998)). It is also worth noting that some of the authors are globally prominent through awards such as the Nobel Prize in Literature (Ishiguro won in 2017; Murakami is a frequent contender), or through cult readership (Murakami and

⁵⁹ Gupta, *Contemporary Literature: The Basics*, p. 33.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 33.

⁶¹ Pascale Casanova, *The World Republic of Letters*, trans. by M. B. DeBevoise (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2004), p. xii.

⁶² Pascale Casanova, ‘Literature as a World’, *New Left Review*, 31 (2005), 71-90 (p. 75).

Philip K. Dick). Five of the literary texts examined have altogether been translated into over forty languages (*The Vegetarian*, *The Wind-Up Bird Chronicle*, *Never Let Me Go*, Mahasweta Devi's 'Pterodactyl, Puran Sahay, and Pirtha' (1995), and *Texaco*). My readings of four primary texts are based on their English translations, which I will address subsequently. Two novels have been adapted into films that have been globally distributed and consumed (*Never Let Me Go* into a film of the same name (2010), and Philip K. Dick's *Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep?* (1968) into Ridley Scott's *Blade Runner* (1982), a film that has become iconic and has spawned a recent sequel, *Blade Runner 2049* (2017)). This global impact extends to Eve Ensler's *The Vagina Monologues* (1998)—the play I have drawn upon to support my primary readings—which has been staged internationally, adapted into a play of another language (Marathi), and which has initiated a social movement called 'V-Day'. The global reception of these texts reflects their contemporaneity or relevance to many people worldwide and their everyday experiences. Analysing these texts helps to offer a fuller picture of experiences of marginalisation and resistance on a local and global scale.

I would like to stress, however, that my specific textual focus is critically informed by the sense of this international literary space as one of struggle. My approach does not assume this world of letters as 'one of peaceful internationalism, a world of free and equal access in which literary recognition is available to all writers, an enchanted world that exists outside time and space and so escapes the mundane conflicts of human history'⁶³. Writers face difficulties, competition, and rejection as they endeavour to create a place for themselves within the peculiar economy of literature.⁶⁴ Several of the texts considered here, and that have also been categorised as 'postcolonial', exemplify how writers from countries in Africa, the Indian subcontinent, and Asia demanded access to literary legitimacy and existence within international literary space.⁶⁵ An author like Dick, who died shortly before *Blade Runner*'s release in 1982, has also spent most of his life in poverty despite a cult readership.⁶⁶ In this sense, the selected literary texts are in themselves intimately

⁶³ Casanova, *The World Republic of Letters*, p. 43.

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 9.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 11.

⁶⁶ Frank Rose, 'The Second Coming of Philip K. Dick', *Wired*, 12 January 2013 <<https://www.wired.com/2003/12/philip/>> [accessed 6 September 2018] (para. 3 of 38).

exemplary of the experience of being marginalised through globalising processes, and of resisting such processes.

My readings of four primary texts—*The Vegetarian*, *The Wind-Up Bird Chronicle*, ‘Pterodactyl, Puran Sahay, and Pirtha’, and *Texaco*—are based on their English translations (from Korean, Japanese, Bengali, and French-Creole respectively). Regarding my reading practice for these translated texts, I read them as unique literary texts in themselves, standing on their own merits.⁶⁷ This means that when analysing these translated texts, I do not assume to know the original language. But I still read them with the awareness that they are translations, because as Gupta points out: ‘it is doubtful whether there’s any author in, say, the past two millennia who has not been influenced by, or worked with, translations, or for that matter any reader who has not engaged with translated literary texts’⁶⁸. In the early twenty-first century, our lives are interwoven inextricably with translations at every level—from the news we read or listen that involves numerous acts of translation, from speaking to people in a common language that involves translations on one side or the other, from watching subtitled films, and so on.⁶⁹ Correspondingly, contemporary literature reflects a world that works through many layers of translations.⁷⁰ Literature in translation is also an ever-increasing part of the literature that is sold and bought now in any language with a significant readership.⁷¹

I have used the following strategies to help me read and analyse the translated texts confidently. Firstly, I have consulted and cited authors’ own comments about their works (whether from interviews or manifestos), which ensures that my literary readings have context that go beyond linguistic discrepancies. Accordingly, I have cited Han’s assertion of her female protagonist’s sexual agency in the second chapter, Murakami’s concern about violence underlying Japan’s neo-nationalism that he

⁶⁷ I follow Gupta regarding the reliable independence of translated literary works. He states: ‘Literary translation has itself become a significant area of academic interest through the 1980s and 1990s. This has taken several noteworthy directions. The principles and practicalities of translating literary texts from one language to another have been carefully examined. The social and political contexts in which literary translations are undertaken have been studied. The ideological factors that are implicit in translating literature—in colonial or postcolonial or Cold War conditions, amidst globalisation processes—have been analysed. Conventional attitudes towards translations and translators [...] have themselves been dissected. The role of translations in literary circulation and influences has been extensively charted. Naturally, amidst such researches, literary translations have acquired an unprecedented academic respectability of late and are now themselves regarded as distinctive literary works.’ Gupta, *Contemporary Literature: The Basics*, p. 14.

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 12.

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 12.

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 12.

⁷¹ *Ibid.*, p. 12.

conveys in relation to skin in the third chapter, and in the fifth chapter, Devi's observation about the significance of her pterodactyl and Chamoiseau's views on Créolité.⁷² Secondly, if I had doubts regarding certain expressions used or cultural context, I worked together with native speakers as we compared between the original and translated texts.⁷³ Thirdly, I have cited from translators' own analyses of the texts (Jay Rubin on *The Wind-Up Bird Chronicle* in the third chapter). This supports my reading of these translated texts as unique works that stand on their own merits.

The principles governing my focus on these specific texts might then beg the question of why this thesis intervenes in the field of contemporary literature, rather than of world literature. Indeed, the international literary space undercuts Casanova's proposal of a 'world republic of letters'—a world literary model. Debates on world literature have gained currency in the field of literary studies in recent years, particularly from the 1990s onwards with the advent of globalisation, and primarily in relation to academic interest in reconceptualising the institutional space of comparative literature.⁷⁴ The phrase 'world literature' or *Weltliteratur* was originally proposed by German writer Johann Wolfgang von Goethe in 1827 as a holistic conception of the sum total of all the literature in the world. It has rapidly become the new paradigm for the study of literature around the world in the turn of the twenty-first century. In this, it is accompanied by other prominent literary critical paradigms that emphasise similarly transnational features of literary history such as cosmopolitanism, and postcolonial and diaspora studies. This literary and critical phenomenon reflects the increased awareness of the international exchange of people

⁷² There has been some controversy recently regarding the English 'mistranslation' of *The Vegetarian* by Deborah Smith. It has been asserted that due to Smith's mistranslation, representations of the novel's characters have significantly differed between the original and the translation, which could make my own analysis of the English translation contentious. However, my analysis of the novel is supported by the author Han's own comments on the agency of her characters, which I have provided. It is also worth noting that despite the controversy, critics of Smith's translation acknowledge that she 'carried out perhaps the most important task of all: She successfully introduced a work of literature to people who might otherwise never have had a chance to read it'. Charse Yun, 'You Say Melon, I Say Lemon: Deborah Smith's Flawed Yet Remarkable Translation of "The Vegetarian"', *Korea Exposé*, 2 July 2017 <<https://www.koreaexpose.com/deborah-smith-translation-han-kang-novel-vegetarian/>> [accessed 9 January 2018] (para. 33 of 33). See also Claire Armitstead, 'Lost in (mis)translation? English take on Korean novel has critics up in arms', *The Guardian*, 15 January 2018 <<https://www.theguardian.com/books/booksblog/2018/jan/15/lost-in-mistranslation-english-take-on-korean-novel-has-critics-up-in-arms>> [accessed 9 September 2018].

⁷³ This applies to my attempt to find out whether Han, in her use of the Mongolian mark on her protagonist's body as a key literary device, was also alluding to geopolitical relations between South Korea and Mongolia. See footnote 124 in the second chapter for more elaboration.

⁷⁴ See Theo D'haen, *The Routledge Concise History of World Literature* (Oxford: Routledge, 2012); Gupta, *Globalization and Literature*; Christopher Prendergast, 'Introduction', in *Debating World Literature*, ed. by Christopher Prendergast (London: Verso, 2004), pp. vii-xiii.

and ideas provoked by globalisation studies.⁷⁵ In other words, literary critics have turned their focus to world literature in recent years to reformulate the relationship between globalisation and literature as informed by the lived experience of a contemporary, globalising world.

But globalisation studies have had relatively little to say about the role of literature in tracing the forces of such contemporary culture exchange.⁷⁶ World literary critics, then, consider how texts themselves move in time across media, languages, and territories with increasing speed and reach. Correspondingly, discussions on world literature currently lean towards exploring various ways of mapping such forms of literary circulation and exchange amidst different parts of the world through time—rethinking comparative literary method through the concept of ‘world literature’.⁷⁷

However, such engagements with comparative literary method under the ‘world literature’ differ from my primary focus on contemporary literature and its representation of the lived experience of globalisation (even as they are conjoined in some respects). Considerations of ‘world literature’ and of ‘contemporary literature’ (in this thesis) both probe the relationship between literature and globalisation. But world literature mainly treats globalisation as ‘an underlying determinant at a certain remove—as the sociological pretext or warrant for a fresh engagement with questions

⁷⁵ Goethe introduced the term ‘world literature’ in response to discussions of his oeuvre in French newspapers: ‘Everywhere one hears and reads about the progress of the human race, about the future prospects for world and human relationships. However that may be on the whole, which is not my office to investigate and more closely determine, I nevertheless would personally like to make my friends aware that I am convinced a universal world literature is in the process of being constituted, in which an honorable role is reserved for us Germans.’ Johann Wolfgang Goethe, *Jubiläums-Ausgabe in 40 Bänden*, Vol. 38 (Stuttgart: J.G. Gotta, 1912), p. 97. Trans. by and cited in John Pizer, ‘Goethe’s “World Literature” Paradigm and Contemporary Cultural Globalization’, *Comparative Literature*, 52.3 (2000), 213-27 (p. 215). For a history of *Weltliteratur*, see D’Haen, *The Routledge Concise History of World Literature*; Stefan Hoesel-Uhlig, ‘Changing Fields: The Directions of Goethe’s *Weltliteratur*’, in *Debating World Literature*, pp. 26-53. Regarding world literature’s registration of globalised cultural exchange, see Eric Hayot, ‘World Literature and Globalization’, in *The Routledge Companion to World Literature*, ed. by Theo D’haen, David Damrosch and Djelal Kadir (London: Routledge, 2012), pp. 223-31; Warwick Research Collective (WReC), *Combined and Uneven Development: Towards a New Theory of World-Literature* (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2015).

⁷⁶ Christopher Prendergast points out that a work such as Appadurai’s *Modernity at Large: Cultural Dimensions of Globalization* (1996) explores the global movements of visual and electronic media but conspicuously neglects to mention the written word, especially in book form. Prendergast, p. viii.

⁷⁷ Prominent world literature models that have been proposed include Casanova’s ‘literature-world’, Franco Moretti’s ‘trees’ and ‘waves’ through ‘distant reading’, David Damrosch’s sense of world literature as a ‘mode of reading’ and as ‘writing that gains in translation’, and the WReC’s ‘world-literature’ as the literature of the modern capitalist world-system. Franco Moretti, ‘Conjectures on World Literature’, *New Left Review*, 1 (2000), 54-68; David Damrosch, *What is World Literature?* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2003); WReC, *Combined and Uneven Development: Towards a New Theory of World-Literature*.

of comparative literary method’⁷⁸. Contemporary literature is directly interested in globalisation as context—that is, how texts are resonant of the experience of everyday life in a globalising world.⁷⁹

Critical approaches to world literature such as those of the Warwick Research Collective (WReC), Pheng Cheah, and Svend Erik Larsen are also attentive to the literary representation of the lived experience of globalisation, even as some of these approaches do not limit themselves to contemporary literature but also draw on texts from other periods in recognition of a deeper history of globalisation.⁸⁰ Sarah Brouillette, Mathias Nilges, and Emilio Sauri have altogether also started to rethink the notion of the contemporary through the lens of world literature.⁸¹ This thesis, then, is sympathetic to a world literary sensibility. But with regard to my main interest in starting from the lived body and its experience of globalisation as represented in contemporary literature, I am not attempting to map all these texts from their different cultural locations into a network of kinaesthetic movement so as to engage in questions of comparative literary method—hence my intervention into ‘contemporary literature’ rather than ‘world literature’. More specifically, by prioritising the literary representation of the embodied experience of global contemporaneity, my approach examines literature as a kind of testimony—a way of bearing witness to culture.⁸² In

⁷⁸ WReC, p. 5. Gupta also suggests that world literature reflects the potential globalisation of literary studies in the academy. Gupta, *Globalization and Literature*, p. 145.

⁷⁹ Indeed, a world literature model and method like Moretti’s distant reading and his interest in graphs, maps, and trees—in enacting such a dramatic shift in the scale of analysing literature (from close to far)—explicitly states his desire to describe ‘objects that have no equivalent within lived experience’. Franco Moretti, ‘The end of the beginning: a reply to Christopher Prendergast’, *New Left Review*, 41 (2006), 71-86 (p. 82). Cited in Hayot, p. 225.

⁸⁰ WReC considers a range of literary texts produced at different places across the twentieth century that they feel ‘share not only common themes, plots and subjects, but also a range of formal features that we propose to call “irrealist”’—features that reflect how capitalist modernity is lived. WReC, p. 51. Cheah considers late-twentieth century postcolonial narrative fiction that ‘provide cognitive mappings of the position of the societies they portray in the global capitalist system and [that] attempt to stage the heterotemporality of alternative modernities’ as examples of world literature that enact ‘processes of postcolonial literary reworlding’. Pheng Cheah, *What is a World? On Postcolonial Literature as World Literature* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2016), p. 214. Larsen brings together literary texts from different places and spanning from the eighteenth to the late-twentieth centuries to explore their aesthetic registrations of the lived experience of everyday or ‘banal cosmopolitanism’—a concept by German sociologist Ulrich Beck that Larsen builds upon. Svend Erik Larsen, *Literature and the Experience of Globalization: Texts Without Borders*, trans. by John Irons (London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2017), p. 47.

⁸¹ Sarah Brouillette, Mathias Nilges and Emilio Sauri, ‘Introduction’, in *Literature and the Global Contemporary*, ed. by Sarah Brouillette, Mathias Nilges and Emilio Sauri (Cham: Palgrave Macmillan, 2017), pp. xv-xxxviii.

⁸² My view echoes Chamoiseau’s own regarding his representation of Marie-Sophie Laborieux (the female protagonist of *Texaco*) and her strategies of survival and resistance, as grounded in the lived experiences of Creole women, *matadoras*: ‘Those who [...] presume that literature is simply an intellectual discourse about a culture; they forget that it’s also a way of bearing witness to that culture,

other words, my approach recognises literature as concretising a kind of reality or truth about a given geopolitical context, environment, everyday existence, about given people, ordinary lives and transactions.⁸³ I will elaborate on this point in the section ‘For a Kinaesthetic Methodology’. But I also recognise that my findings could lead into future work that more explicitly conjoins literary representations of bodily kinaesthesia with world literature, and will address this in my Conclusion.

Underlying this section’s discussion on the connection between globalisation and literature, in relation to the contemporary, is the pervasive question of representation—specifically that of the body and its acts of resistance. As I will show in the following section, analyses of contemporary literary representations of bodily resistance practices have tended to register the body as an Other to the logocentric, written text—unrepresentable by virtue of its corporeal materiality. This unrepresentability of the body also echoes the sense of the ‘disappeared’ body in postmodernist literary discourse, which leaves the agency of the body in doubt. However, this thesis recognises the body as a much more complex site of critique, and it challenges the unrepresentability of the body in the text by analysing bodies and their movements on their own dynamic terms.

POSTCOLONIAL AND POSTMODERN LITERARY REPRESENTATIONS OF BODILY RESISTANCE

The method of analysing contemporary literary texts undertaken in this thesis differs from those in the field where studies of literary representations of resistance practices in relation to the body under contemporary globalisation have tended to emphasise the material body as ‘othered’ to the written text. I contend that reading bodies and their practices in this way enables us to get a more intimate sense of the experience and workings of bodily kinaesthesia, particularly in terms of their motor intentionality. In light of the relative absence of globalisation as a literary classification, I would like to consider two literary critical discourses that, more or less explicitly, address literary representations of contemporary global

a form of testimony.’ Lucien Taylor, ‘Créolité Bites: A conversation with Patrick Chamoiseau, Raphaël Confiant, and Jean Bernabé’, *Transition*, 74 (1997), 124-61 (p. 154).

⁸³ Gupta, *Globalization and Literature*, p. 71.

consciousness—that of postcolonialism and postmodernism.⁸⁵ Resistance and its literary representation are key questions in postcolonialism, but the discursive direction that it has taken is intertwined with the question of representation itself under postmodernism.

Many analyses of literary representations of the body and its enactment of postcolonial resistance have tended to be structured around the binary opposition of body versus text. These readings tend to show how resistance is enacted through the reclamation, recovery, or re-memembering of the ‘lost’ body in the postcolonial text—the body being obliterated under Eurocentric colonialist discursive apparatuses as exemplified by the written text.⁸⁶ But such readings leave the agency of the body in doubt, as Isabel Hoving notes:

Within postcolonial practice, the text is made to bear many burdens: to be the site of colonialism, of Eurocentric dominance, of passive, elite intellectualism. The body is then mobilized to disturb or shatter the dominance of writing. On closer scrutiny, one finds that this disturbance is only relative: it occurs as text, in the text, and it leaves the text relatively intact.⁸⁷

This is because in such criticism, the body is modelled on the text, and it is only as such that it is able to interfere with the textual.⁸⁸ Underlying this is the sense of the body as unrepresentable in the written text. I will come back to this in my discussion of postmodernism shortly.

⁸⁵ Regarding the common ground between globalisation and postcolonialism, Simon Gikandi has argued: ‘While diverse writers on globalization and postcolonialism might have different interpretations of the exact meaning of these categories, or their long-term effects on the institutions of knowledge production in the modern world, they have at least two important things in common: they are concerned with explaining forms of social and cultural organization whose ambition is to transcend the boundaries of the nation-state, and they seek to provide new vistas for understanding cultural flows that can no longer be explained by a homogenous Eurocentric narrative of development and social change.’ Simon Gikandi, ‘Globalization and the Claims of Postcoloniality’, *South Atlantic Quarterly*, 100.3 (2001), 626-58 (pp. 627-28). Regarding the link between globalisation and post-modernism, and the absence of globalisation as a literary classification, Liam Connell suggests this to be due to the widespread adoption of postmodernism as an aesthetic category in literary studies, and that the postmodern closely resembles social-science classifications of globalisation. Liam Connell, ‘Global Narratives: Globalisation and Literary Studies’, *Critical Survey*, 16.2 (2004), 78-95 (p. 84).

⁸⁶ For examples of such readings, see Helen Tiffin’s ‘Cold Hearts and (Foreign) Tongues: Recitation and the Reclamation of the Female Body in the Works of Erna Brodber and Jamaica Kincaid’, *Callaloo*, 16.4 (1993), 909-21; see also Michael Dash’s ‘In Search of the Lost Body: Redefining the Subject in Caribbean Literature’, in *The Post-colonial Studies Reader*, ed. by Bill Ashcroft, Gareth Griffiths and Helen Tiffin (London: Routledge, 2003), pp. 332-35.

⁸⁷ Isabel Hoving, *In Praise of New Travelers: Reading Caribbean Migrant Women’s Writing* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2001), p. 225.

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 226.

Yet this thesis recognises the body to be a much more complex site of critique, as Hoving and other thinkers like Carole Boyce Davies do.⁸⁹ As I will show in my analyses of certain texts that might be categorised under postcolonial writing, the body can be read on its own dynamic terms as it enacts resistance. My readings of these bodily resistances are attentive to how the literary text can evoke the presence of what Hoving calls ‘a living, antagonistic body’⁹⁰ through the body’s dynamic movement. This is especially since, in my second and fifth chapters in particular, I examine the sexual and energetic resistances of female and postcolonial, indigenous peoples respectively who are shown to have no voice and are rendered mute in the texts. This method of analysis, then, can enable us to register how these marginalised peoples enact their own agency and resistance through their bodies beyond the binary opposition of body versus text, getting us closer to the experience and workings of the body’s motor decisions and motor intentionality. Postcolonial analyses of literary representations of bodily resistances that are attentive to orality as a form of expression, as well as the musical and dance rhythms of marginalised bodies are also aligned with this sense of the body’s performativity as a mode of resistance.⁹¹

Studies that register the dynamics of bodies as enacting modes of postcolonial resistance whether through orality, music, or dance have tended to be restricted to specific national or regional contexts, especially those of the Caribbean, Africa, and India that traditionally fall under the rubric of postcolonial studies. Or else, they address postcolonial literary resistance in relation to modernism. Russell McDougall’s studies of what he calls the ‘kinetics’ of the novels of Chinua Achebe and Wilson Harris in relation to body gait, traditional African dance attitudes, and the bodily rituals of Carnival are such examples.⁹² Jeannine Murray-Román’s *Performance and Personhood in Caribbean Literature: From Alexis to the Digital Age* (2016) considers how the Martinican writer Patrick Chamoiseau—whose novel *Texaco* (1998) is examined in this thesis—renders the physical impact of Creole orality, not its syntax

⁸⁹ Carole Boyce Davies calls attention to the aspects of ‘other-ness’ within the self, offering body gesture as one example. Carole Boyce Davies, *Black Women, Writing, and Identity: Migrations of the Subject* (London: Routledge, 1994), pp. 163-64.

⁹⁰ Hoving, p. 226.

⁹¹ See Kamau Brathwaite, *Roots* (Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 1993); Antonio Benítez-Rojo, *The Repeating Island* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1992).

⁹² Russell McDougall, ‘Achebe’s *Arrow of God*: The Kinetic Idiom of an Unmasking’, *Kunapipi*, 9.2 (1987), 8-24; McDougall, ‘Okonkwo’s Walk: The choreography of *Things Fall Apart*’, *Wasafiri*, 2.3 (1985), 12-16; McDougall, ‘Music in the Body of the Book of Carnival’, *Journal of West Indian Literature*, 4.2 (1990), 1-24.

or vocabulary, through the moving body, for instance through the vibrations of the throat and chest.⁹³ Hoving herself has read one of Caribbean writer Jamaica Kincaid's novels—whose novel *Lucy* (1990) is examined in this thesis—in terms of the sensual unruliness of the body, particularly its smell.⁹⁴ Regarding Indian literature, Upamanyu Pablo Mukherjee's *Postcolonial Environments: Nature, Culture and the Contemporary Indian Novel in English* (2010) draws on the rhythms of *Kathakali*—a dance-drama form peculiar to Kerala—in his reading of Arundhati Roy's novel *The God of Small Things* (1997).⁹⁵ My thesis differs from these by taking a comparative approach to contemporary literary texts that come from various cultural locations, illuminating how, for instance, different modes of interaction between bodies and their material environments produce different resource materials for resistance, as I will show in my fifth chapter. It also analyses texts that have not been brought together previously—for instance, literary representations of neo-colonial bodily resistances from the Caribbean alongside those from South Korea in my second chapter, which expands the scope of heteronormativity into transnational contexts.

Going back to the body/text binary opposition, as earlier mentioned, analyses that aim to recuperate the materiality of the body in the postcolonial text work from the assumption that the body exemplifies that which is unrepresentable through the language of the text. In such readings, the body's very unrepresentability in the written text exemplifies its resistance, as its material presence disrupts the written text and resists totalising interpretations of the text.⁹⁶ This sense of the unrepresentable body echoes a trope of postmodern contemporary culture—the sense that the body has 'disappeared'.⁹⁷

⁹³ Jeannine Murray-Román, *Performance and Personhood in Caribbean Literature: From Alexis to the Digital Age* (Virginia: University of Virginia Press, 2016).

⁹⁴ Hoving, p. 227.

⁹⁵ Upamanyu Pablo Mukherjee, *Postcolonial Environments: Nature, Culture and the Contemporary Indian Novel in English* (Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010).

⁹⁶ Dash echoes this in his essay, where by recovering the 'lost' body in Caribbean writing, he states: 'Post-modernism concentrates on the inadequacy of interpretation and the disorienting reality of the unexplainable. Caribbean writing exploits precisely this terrain of the unspeakable. In the radical questioning of the need to totalise, systematise and control, the Caribbean writer is a natural deconstructionist who praises latency, formlessness and plurality. In order to survive, the Caribbean sensibility must spontaneously decipher and interpret the sign systems of those who wish to dominate and control. [...] It is, perhaps, a matter of demonstrating the opacity and inexhaustibility of a world that resists systematic construction or transcendent meaning.' Dash, p. 335.

⁹⁷ On the overlaps between postcolonialism and postmodernism, Bill Ashcroft, Gareth Griffiths, and Helen Tiffin note: 'the major project of postmodernism—the deconstruction of the centralised, logocentric master narratives of European culture, is very similar to the post-colonial project of dismantling the Centre/Margin binarism of imperial discourse. The decentring of discourse, the focus on the significance of language and writing in the construction of experience, the use of the subversive

Arthur Kroker and Marilouise Kroker have traced this trope of the ‘disappearing’ (natural) body under postmodernity to its pervasive mediatisation: ‘the aestheticization of the body and its dissolution into a semiurgy of floating body parts reveals that *we* are being processed through a media scene consisting of our own (exteriorized) body organs in the form of second-order simulacra’⁹⁸. That is to say, as images of bodies rapidly circulate through globalised media in late capitalist, postmodern culture, as in advertising for instance, the image of the body is no longer used to inform or promote a product in the ordinary sense, but is increasingly geared to manipulating desires and tastes that may or may not have anything to do with the product to be sold.⁹⁹ Correspondingly, the image has become a commodity in itself, and increased focus on the rapid and accurate replication of such images exemplify the issue of the ‘simulacrum’—a state of such near perfect replication that the difference between the original and the copy becomes almost impossible to spot.¹⁰⁰ Additionally, in the light of technological advances in the contemporary era, Kroker and Kroker argue that the body has achieved a purely rhetorical existence: ‘its reality is that of refuse expelled as surplus-matter no longer necessary for the autonomous functioning of the technoscape’¹⁰¹—thus the ‘disappearance’ of the organic body. Accordingly, analyses of certain texts that might be categorised under postmodern literature tend to register bodily representations in terms of simulacra, of the ghostly, or of psychological instability.¹⁰²

So when the circulation of images of bodies and the technological subordination of the organic body under postmodernity seem to confirm the ‘disappearance’ of the body, how can a method of analysis that follows the assertion

strategies of mimicry, parody and irony—all these concerns overlap those of postmodernism and so a conflation of the two discourses has often occurred.’ Bill Ashcroft, Gareth Griffiths and Helen Tiffin, ‘Introduction’, in *The Post-colonial Studies Reader*, pp. 117-18 (p. 117).

⁹⁸ Arthur Kroker and Marilouise Kroker, ‘Body Digest: Theses on the Disappearing Body in the Hyper-Modern Condition’, *Body Invaders: Panic Sex in America*, ed. Arthur Kroker and Marilouise Kroker (New York: St Martin’s, 1987), pp. i-xvi (p. ii). See also N. Katherine Hayles, *How We Became Posthuman: Virtual Bodies in Cybernetics, Literature, and Informatics* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1999).

⁹⁹ Harvey, p. 287.

¹⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 287-89.

¹⁰¹ Kroker and Kroker, p. ii.

¹⁰² For examples of such readings, see Wisam Kh. Abdul-Jabbar, ‘Colonial Mimicry in Philip Dick’s *Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep?*’, *inquire*, 2.2 (2012) <<http://inquire.streetmag.org/articles/91>> [accessed 12 September 2017]; Andrew Hock Soon Ng, ‘Tarrying with the Numinous: Postmodern Japanese Gothic Stories’, *New Zealand Journal of Asian Studies*, 9.2 (2007), 65-86; John Whittier Treat, ‘Murakami Haruki and the cultural materialism of multiple personality disorder’, *Japan Forum*, 25.1 (2013), 87-111.

that the literary text can evoke the presence of a living, antagonistic body work in these instances? As I will show in my third chapter, in the context of mediated war, a methodology that does not read texts through the binary opposition of body versus text is not confined to the question of which is the original (or genuine) and which is the copy, but rather, is able to register how agency is enacted in relation to the mediality of the image of the body—that is, how these images of bodies are consumed, shared, and recontextualised by contemporary audiences through their everyday media practices. This method of analysis is undertaken by attending to physical manipulations of the skin—which becomes the corporeal substance that stands in for the image of the body—thus refusing to read the skin as separate from the idea of an ‘entire’ body but rather, as constitutive of it. Once again, as this thesis takes a comparative approach, the literary texts considered in this chapter—Nigerian writer Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie’s novel *Half of a Yellow Sun* (2006) and Japanese writer Haruki Murakami’s novel *The Wind-Up Bird Chronicle* (1998)—have not been conventionally analysed alongside each other. With regard to *Half of a Yellow Sun*, John Masterson has analysed it in relation to its ‘embodied images’ and visceral representations of bodies, but specifically in relation to ethno-nationalism and the composition of the wider body politic.¹⁰³ Hamish Dalley also briefly notes the tension that emerges between corporeal and visual affects in *Half of a Yellow Sun*, but otherwise grounds his discussion of the body as a site of trauma.¹⁰⁴ Stacey Michele Olster has also analysed *The Wind-Up Bird Chronicle* and identified the body as a locus of the enactment of state power through its relation to media technology, but her sense of how Murakami endorses the depth of the body as accessing human subjectivity once again exemplifies her reading of the ‘volume’ of the body as separate from the ‘flat’ skin.¹⁰⁵

In my fourth chapter, I show that the methodology used in this thesis also resists the instrumentalist views of both organic body and inorganic tool that Kroker and Kroker unwittingly echo, which underlie their sense of the ‘disappeared’ organic body. By taking technology to have become an integral part of the contemporary

¹⁰³ John Masterson, ‘Posing, Exposing, Opposing: Accounting for Contested (Corpo)Realities in Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie’s *Half of a Yellow Sun*’, in *Expressions of the Body: Representations in African Text and Image*, ed. by Charlotte Baker (Oxford: Peter Lang, 2009), 137-160.

¹⁰⁴ Hamish Dalley, ‘The Question of “Solidarity” in Postcolonial Trauma Fiction: Beyond the Recognition Principle’, *Humanities*, 4 (2015), 369-92.

¹⁰⁵ Stacey Olster, *The Trash Phenomenon: Contemporary Literature, Popular Culture, and the Making of the American Century* (Georgia: University of Georgia Press, 2003).

global environment as well as having shifted our sense of embodiment in the world, this thesis's methodology is thus aligned with posthumanist discourse, inasmuch as it recognises the confusion of organic and inorganic boundaries that contemporary bodies exemplify. The two texts considered in this chapter—American writer Philip K. Dick's novel *Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep?* (1968) and Japanese-British writer Kazuo Ishiguro's novel *Never Let Me Go* (2005)—have been analysed alongside each other previously, but approaches to these texts have differed from the critical approach taken in this thesis. Paul Sheehan has read both novels in terms of the body, but he is specifically interested in contextualising these posthuman bodies in relation to myth.¹⁰⁶ Regarding *Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep?*, Klaus Benesch also calls for attention to the physicality of the cybernetic body, but specifically focuses on the act of gazing as part of a Lacanian approach.¹⁰⁷ Regarding *Never Let Me Go*, Pramod K. Nayar highlights the cybernetic liveliness of the clone body, but he reads this body as a Deleuzian assemblage.¹⁰⁸

FOR A KINAESTHETIC METHODOLOGY

My methodology, which recognises that literary texts can evoke the presence of living, antagonistic bodies, ultimately marks an analytical shift. This shift involves looking at how literary texts represent body movement in terms of textuality, to considering how those texts can represent the lived body and its experience of a globalising world in a 'rhythmic' way. To follow Hoving once more: 'written texts can be perceived as a rhythmic art too [...] This refusal to study the body as text, or even the text as text, is comparable to the efforts to theorize the text as performance and event instead of as reference.'¹⁰⁹ This sense of the text as performance and event thus recognises that there is an embodied dimension to the notion of literature as testimony that bears witness to culture. As Arthur W. Frank, who has written about and testified to his own experience with testicular cancer and who is concerned with how bodies can give stories their particular shape and direction, notes: 'Not only storytelling, but stories themselves are embodied. The body is the medium and the

¹⁰⁶ Paul Sheehan, 'Posthuman Bodies', in *The Cambridge Companion to the Body in Literature*, ed. by David Hillman and Ulrika Maude (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2015), pp. 245-60.

¹⁰⁷ Klaus Benesch, 'Technology, Art, and the Cybernetic Body: The Cyborg as Cultural Other in Fritz Lang's *Metropolis* and Philip K. Dick's *Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep?*', *Amerikastudien / American Studies*, 44.3 (1999), 379-92.

¹⁰⁸ Pramod K. Nayar, *Posthumanism* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2014).

¹⁰⁹ Hoving, p. 227.

mediator of whether and how any story is told, and bodies respond to stories.’¹¹⁰ My reference to ‘kinaesthetic bodies’ in the thesis title corresponds to this point regarding the aesthetics of literary representation, in addition to my main contention that the texts I examine represent bodily kinaesthesia, though it is not the primary focus of the thesis to engage in questions on literary aesthetics.

The authors that I consider in this thesis have also registered their interest in the dynamics of body movement in their literary works. In an interview, Kincaid has observed: ‘I’ve become very interested in writing about sex, or smells.’¹¹¹ We can also look to the authors’ own descriptions of their writing processes, as Adichie has mentioned how writing *Half of a Yellow Sun* was ‘a bruising experience’ and that she often stopped just to cry.¹¹² Murakami has said that ‘The process of writing this novel [*The Wind-Up Bird Chronicle*] was a process similar to making myself naked, in a way’¹¹³. In *Texaco*, Chamoiseau has even included a character named Oiseau de Cham—his fictional counterpart—who is also nicknamed ‘Word Scratcher’. Chamoiseau’s sense of scratching words on paper shows awareness of the dynamics of body movement in relation to the crafting of narratives. These observations all reveal sensitivity to the workings of bodily-kinaesthetic intelligence in relation to literary aesthetics, representation, and literature as testimony—particularly that of struggle and resistance.

At the same time, my methodology overlaps with other methods of analysis that similarly link aesthetics and the representation of bodies in literature, such as hapticity and ekphrasis. I go into more detail about these two concepts in my third chapter, as they are specifically relevant to my reading of skin. In that chapter, I also offer my reasons for preferring my methodology for my analyses.

My methodology raises the additional question of the reader or the critic’s own experience of reading the text as performance and event. Dance researchers have noted that kinaesthetic awareness cultivates ‘kinesthetic resonance’—where the sensations of movement that dancers feel help with learning to dance, even just by

¹¹⁰ Arthur W. Frank, ‘Conclusion: The Varieties of My Body: Pain, Ethics and *Illusio*’, in *Routledge Handbook of Body Studies*, ed. by Bryan S. Turner (Oxford: Routledge, 2012), pp. 389-95 (p. 394).

¹¹¹ Donna Perry, ‘An Interview with Jamaica Kincaid’, in *Reading Black, Reading Feminist: A Critical Anthology*, ed. by Henry Louis Gates, Jr. (New York: Meridian, 199), pp. 492-509 (p. 499).

¹¹² Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie, ‘In the Shadow of Biafra’, in *Half of a Yellow Sun* (London: Fourth Estate, 2014), pp. 9-12 (pp. 11-12).

¹¹³ John Wray, ‘Haruki Murakami, The Art of Fiction No. 182’, *The Paris Review*, <<http://www.theparisreview.org/interviews/2/the-art-of-fiction-no-182-haruki-murakami>> [accessed 21 September 2016].

watching others move.¹¹⁴ There is thus an affective dimension to this sense of kinaesthetic awareness. This means that the viewer of the dance, or the reader of the text—if watching others move is transposed into the act of reading about moving bodies—also sensually experiences this body movement.¹¹⁵ The question of how the reader or critic might herself or himself be affected through such a method of analysing contemporary literary texts is beyond the scope of this thesis, but can be a future direction that this project can be taken into, as I will indicate in my Conclusion.

However, this thesis does not claim that, by way of this method of analysing contemporary literary texts, *all* contemporary literature should be read as ‘performance and event instead of as reference’. Neither does this thesis claim that a kinaesthetic method of literary analysis is solely relevant to the embodied experience of *contemporary* globalisation. It would be interesting to see how a kinaesthetic method of analysis would translate to other older periods of globalisation as represented in literature. But it is significant that these authors, from their various cultural locations and writing in the contemporary moment, render in their texts the movements of marginalised bodies in relation to global processes in ways that call attention to the dynamics of these body movements through time and space, beyond presenting the body-as-text. As I show in each chapter, these body movements significantly respond to global changes in lived experiences of both time and space and are enacted with a sense of being part of a global consciousness. This is also why I have chosen to comparatively analyse a varied range of contemporary literary texts from different cultural locations that have not been conventionally read alongside one another, though I have also noted where conceptions of bodies are specific to certain cultures.

The globalised contexts of new sexual politics, mediatised war, technology, and neo-colonial development explored are also not meant to be exhaustive, but reflect the limitations of space in the thesis. As shown in each chapter, these contexts were chosen because of their relevance to the contemporary moment of globalisation, particularly in relation to our changing sense of embodiment in the world. In terms of sexual politics, despite advances made in LGBT rights, heteronormativity is still a dominant sexual order wherein female bodies’ overt displays of the satiation of their

¹¹⁴ Glenna Batson, ‘Proprioception’, *International Association for Dance Medicine and Science (IADMS)*, 2008, pp. 1-4 (p. 1).

¹¹⁵ See *Kinesthetic Empathy in Creative and Cultural Practices*, ed. by Dee Reynolds and Matthew Reason (Bristol: Intellect, 2012).

sexual appetites come into question every day. In terms of war and mediatisation, the occurrence of world wars in the twentieth century, as well as the current ‘diffused war’ with the rise of digital media, have radically changed our embodied sense of a globalised world. In terms of technology, modern medical advances in organ transplantation technologies, as well as the pervasive presence of intelligent machines in everyday life and global work environments, have changed our sense of the material constitution of human bodies. In terms of neo-colonial development, the unsustainability of such practices is testing the limits of our ecological environment with which our bodies interact.

Finally, recalling that literature is one of many sites of cultural resistance, my own readings take place amidst the global multimedia. As mentioned, I analyse literary representations of resistance practices alongside a play, a film adaptation, and an art installation. This is not to claim that these various media offer the same aesthetic experience as literary texts; rather, my aim is to show how other media representations of bodily kinaesthesia can offer ways into reading bodies dynamically. This offers us a fuller understanding of how the global determination of bodies might be resisted and change effected.

THESIS OUTLINE

This thesis is comprised of six chapters, the first of which is this introductory chapter. The subsequent four chapters carry out readings of contemporary literary texts in sequence, paying attention to how they represent acts of resistance enacted by people who are marginalised under contemporary globalisation through bodily kinaesthesia, in the contexts of new sexual politics, mediatised war, technology, and neo-colonial development, and in the different cultural contexts of the Caribbean, South Korea, Nigeria, Japan, the U.S., the U.K., and India. The sixth chapter is my conclusion.

The second chapter, titled ‘Eating Bodies’, analyses Caribbean writer Jamaica Kincaid’s novel *Lucy* (1990) and South Korean writer Han Kang’s novel *The Vegetarian* (2015) alongside Eve Ensler’s play *The Vagina Monologues* (1998) in the context of globalised heteronormativity. This chapter considers how women who have non-heteronormative sexual desires are silenced, and this silencing is experienced as

starvation. This lived experience of marginalisation is reflected in both novels, where the female protagonists are portrayed as hungry women who are starved and silenced. But Kincaid and Han also show how these women resist sexual marginalisation at their respective locations by modifying their bodily behaviour, ‘eating’ the bodies of their sexual partners to ‘feed’ and ‘nourish’ themselves. Accordingly, the flesh is presented as a kind of food. At the same time, when female erotic resistance is represented in this way, heteronormative conceptions of such practices of sexual satiation render them as titillating and pornographic, rather than erotic and nourishing, which would trouble the potentiality of such resistance. Drawing on Audre Lorde’s notion of the erotic as empowering, this chapter contends that Kincaid’s and Han’s emphasis on the sensual pleasure that these female characters experience in their bodies as they ‘eat’ one another and ‘feed’ themselves show these bodily practices as resistance.

From the second chapter, we also see that violence undercuts global homogenisation processes, for to starve someone (and thus to silence them) is a form of violence. Starvation does not just violently silence people; it can also mark bodies in highly visible ways. Indeed in their texts, Kincaid and Han show how, as these hungry women ‘eat’ and bite into one another’s flesh, visible marks are left on bodies—specifically the skin—by way of body scars and birthmarks. These women’s sexual marginalisation is also shown to be connected to how their bodies are represented in media, informing the assumption that their acts of ‘eating’ their partners’ bodies are titillating and pornographic. This begins to suggest globalisation as a process of cultural homogenisation that has violent and visible effects on people’s bodies.

The third chapter, titled ‘Treating Skins’, furthers our understanding of this notion of globalisation as a violent and visible process of cultural homogenisation, particularly in a contemporary world that is very much shaped by and through media. It analyses Nigerian writer Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie’s novel *Half of a Yellow Sun* (2006) and Japanese writer Haruki Murakami’s novel *The Wind-Up Bird Chronicle* (1998). This chapter reads these two novels in the context of the globalised mediatisation of war, as the corporeal marks mentioned earlier hold violent histories that are connected to wartime militaristic violence and because the arena of mediatised war has significantly shaped our experiences of the world. We now live in a new media ecology in which people, events, and news media have become

increasingly connected and interpenetrated. Accordingly, media images of people in the midst of war that are circulated around the world can perpetuate certain ideas about their war experience. This, in turn, can affect how war is conducted locally and globally. The novels show, in their respective cultural contexts of the 1967 Nigeria-Biafra war and the Japanese neo-nationalist reproduction of the 1941 Asia-Pacific war in contemporary Japanese society, that such use or weaponisation of the media marginalises certain war participants and suppresses their particular lived experiences by rendering them ‘invisible’ within the global media ecology. This marginalisation by invisibility is represented in the novels through bodily kinaesthesia, where the skins of Biafran and Japanese citizen soldiers are manipulated or ‘treated’ in media to suit the demands of global audiences. The skin, then, is presented as a fleshy interface between the body and the world, which also gives us the sense of images as phenomena that are the product of negotiations between bodies and media. But Adichie and Murakami also show how these war participants resist their marginalisation in the media by modifying their bodily behaviour, ‘treating’ their own skins in alternative ways that reconstructs negative portrayals of them in global media and offers alternative interpretations of war.

From the third chapter, our understanding of the skin as an ‘interface’ that is imbricated within the global media ecology becomes suggestive for thinking about the body’s role in the haptic technologies—the technologies of touch—that are increasingly shaping our world today. The global media ecology is also driven by artificially intelligent technologies that we co-exist with. As we live in increasingly ‘lively’ global environments, our lived experience of the world changes to that of being posthuman. To echo Donna J. Haraway, we have become cyborgs, a hybrid of machine and organism. One Japanese soldier that Murakami portrays has prosthetic skin—one form of ‘treatment’ that the body undergoes in relation to media technology. He also offers us the vision of modern technologised Japan as being run by cyborgian citizen soldiers. This begins to suggest globalisation as a process of cultural homogenisation that instrumentalises bodies by transforming and heightening our sense of connection to our tools.

The fourth chapter, titled ‘Bodies of Unreliability’, furthers our understanding of globalisation as a process of cultural homogenisation through the instrumentalisation of bodies. The focus will be on analyses of American writer Philip K. Dick’s novel *Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep?* (1968), British director

Ridley Scott's film adaptation *Blade Runner* (1982), and Japanese-British writer Kazuo Ishiguro's novel *Never Let Me Go* (2005) in the context of global techno-utopianism. This is an era where we see the even tighter and intertwined coupling between organism and machine—the making or 'engineering' of the cyborg. As human bodies are 're-engineered' into cyborgs that are reliable in their functions, technology is also assumed to be reliable and never failing to provide all-encompassing solutions to resolve existing inequalities in the global political economy, creating a techno-utopia. But there are existing anomalies to be brought into view, because they signal the marginalisation of certain bodies under global techno-utopianism. The lived experience of marginalisation is represented in the novels through bodily kinaesthesia, where posthuman intelligent beings—presented in the bodily forms of the android and the clone—are portrayed as being trapped within the global political economy. Their bodies are relentlessly 'engineered' to become more and more reliable in their performance so as to sustain the building of techno-utopia. Such representation is informed by an understanding of the body as *techne*, that is, as bodies-in-process that make us consider 'how bodies become assembled in particular ways through their coupling or conjoining with particular objects, practices, techniques and artefacts such that they are always bodies in the making rather than being ready-made'¹¹⁷. But Dick and Ishiguro also show how these posthuman intelligent beings resist marginalisation at their respective locations by modifying their bodily behaviour, enacting bodily unreliability as they hunt, stalk, and shadow their human counterparts. Looking to Scott's film adaptation, this chapter also explores how these practices of bodily unreliability, which include the artificially intelligent performance of memory, can expand our conception of agency in a posthuman context.

From the fourth chapter, we begin to get a sense that these processes of techno-utopian development also involve colonising practices. Certain bodies become enslaved and are physically exploited as resources for the elite. Technological machines have an intimate relation to both the human and natural resources that drive or energise them, which can be seen from how the muscular energies of the human and android/clone bodies in Dick's and Ishiguro's novels run out as they are relentlessly 'engineered' under techno-utopia. This begins to suggest globalisation as

¹¹⁷ Blackman, p. 107.

a process of cultural homogenisation that is exploitative, as it appropriates bodies and nature as energy resources for the production of culture.

The fifth chapter, titled 'Energetic Bodies', furthers our understanding of globalisation as an exploitative process of cultural homogenisation. It analyses Bengali writer Mahasweta Devi's long story 'Pterodactyl, Puran Sahay, and Pirtha' (1995) and Martinican writer Patrick Chamoiseau's novel *Texaco* (1998) in the context of global neo-colonial development. Global neo-colonial development has seen the production of nature and its resource materials to the point of the earth's ecological unsustainability. Such neo-colonial development practices are undercut by the dynamic and indivisible mode of interaction between humans and nature that Raymond Williams has called 'labour'. But these practices are based on exploitation because the 'development' of nature and human bodies into resource is based on a sense of depleting the ecological environment of energy. This includes the depletion of human bodies and their energies to the point of expiry for this aim.¹¹⁸ In their texts, Devi and Chamoiseau represent the lived experience of exploitation and marginalisation under neo-colonial development in their respective cultural locations through bodily kinaesthesia. This is reflected in the muscular underdevelopment of the wasted and dislocated bodies of Indian tribals and Martinican shantytown dwellers in relation to the uneven local and global distribution of resource materials. Such representations understand the body as a form of energy resource. But both writers also show how these marginalised peoples resist exploitation by modifying their bodily behaviour, engaging in alternative practices of ecological development that regenerate energy for their resistance. Drawing on an art installation by Ghanian-born, Nigerian-based artist El Anatsui, this chapter also explores how such regenerative practices can expand our conception of agency.

In the Conclusion, I draw together ideas explored in previous chapters and in sequence to show how the various practices of resistance examined ultimately reveal to us in intimate detail, at the level of the body, the intentionality with which people who are marginalised under globalisation in various contexts and different cultural locations attempt to effect change. I will also suggest future directions that this thesis can be extended into.

¹¹⁸ My argument follows Vandana Shiva's observation that a new meaning of the term 'resource' emerged in 1870 with the advent of industrialism and colonialism. I will elaborate on this in the fifth chapter. Vandana Shiva, 'Resources', in *The Development Dictionary: A Guide to Knowledge as Power*, pp. 228-42 (p. 228).

2

Eating Bodies

One night on stage, I actually entered my vagina. It was an ecstatic experience. It scared me, it energized me, and then I became a driven person, a driven vagina.¹

American playwright, feminist, and activist Eve Ensler made this statement in her 2010 TED talk ‘Suddenly, my body’. Ensler was referring to her time performing her internationally successful episodic play, *The Vagina Monologues* (1998)². As the play’s title suggests, *The Vagina Monologues* presents a series of monologues about vaginas that are based on interviews that Ensler conducted with women in the New York City metro region about their vaginas in the early nineties.³ But what is striking here is Ensler’s sense of ‘entering’ her own vagina as she performed her play and how this body movement ‘energises’ and ‘drives’ her, suggesting sexual agency and empowerment. To unpack the bodily dynamics of this sexual empowerment, we can consider a particular monologue from the play.

This monologue is based on a second interview that Ensler conducted with a lesbian dominatrix and sex-worker, after the latter said she felt disconnected with the original piece Ensler had written, which became a monologue called ‘The Woman Who Loved to Make Vaginas Happy’. The original piece had ended with a summary of the different kinds of moans that Ensler’s interviewee would incite from the mouths of the various women she serviced, from the ‘clit moan’, to the ‘vaginal moan’, to the ‘surprise triple

¹ Eve Ensler, ‘Suddenly, my body’, *TEDWomen 2010*, December 2010
<https://www.ted.com/talks/eve_ensler/transcript?language=en> [accessed 2 February 2017]
(para. 3 of 17).

² Eve Ensler, *The Vagina Monologues* (London: Virago, 2001). Further references are given after quotations in the text.

³ Kimberly A. Williams, ‘*The Vagina Monologues*: Theoretical, Geopolitical, and Pedagogical Concerns’, in *Transnational Borderlands in Women’s Global Networks: The Making of Cultural Resistance*, ed. by Clara Román-Odio and Marta Sierra (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), pp. 203-219 (p. 205).

orgasm moan' (p. 110). But Ensler's interviewee felt that Ensler had 'somehow avoided talking about vaginas, that I was still somehow objectifying them. Even the moans were a way of objectifying the vagina, cutting it off from the rest of the vagina, the rest of the woman. There was a real difference in the way lesbians saw vaginas. I hadn't yet captured it.' (p. 113-14) Consequently, the interviewee encouraged Ensler to 'start from a lesbian-centered place, not framed within a heterosexual context' and do so, she told Ensler: 'You need to talk about entering into vaginas. You can't talk about lesbian sex without doing this.' (p. 115)

These observations by Ensler's interviewee suggest that Ensler's attempt to convey the sensuality of vaginas only via the aural sounding of the mouth kept her critically detached in her representation of the movements of the female body in sexual arousal and pleasure—the satiation of female sexual appetite. We see that Ensler's use of the aural is connected to a heteronormative—heteronormativity being the privileging of heterosexuality on an institutional level, elaborated in the next section—understanding of overt representations of the satiation of female sexual appetite as 'titillating' rather than as empowering, resulting in her discomfort and self-censorship:

I don't know that I wanted to talk about sex. But then again, how can I talk about vaginas without talking about them in action? I am worried about the titillation factor, worried about the piece becoming exploitative. Am I talking about vaginas to arouse people? Is that a bad thing?

(p. 116)

Yet because of this heteronormative understanding, Ensler's attempt to convey female sexual empowerment through the aural moans as produced by the mouth does not ring true for her interviewee as to the lived experience of the sexual act as erotic and nourishing. Ensler's interviewee proceeds to offer explicit detail about the physical act of 'entering into vaginas' to counter these heteronormative assumptions: 'My tongue is on her clitoris. My tongue replaces my fingers. My mouth enters her vagina.' (p. 117) Notably, the dynamics of lesbian sexual penetration here are rendered as female bodies 'eating' each other with pleasure—the body becomes a kind of food.

Carole M. Counihan observes that in many cultures, eating is a sexual and gendered experience throughout life.⁴ She states: ‘Food and sex are metaphorically overlapping. Eating may represent copulation, and food may represent sexuality.’⁵ That Ensler’s lesbian interviewee renders the female body as a kind of food and the sexual act as a kind of eating for sexual pleasure resists heteronormative representations of female sexual appetite by attending to the enactment of female sexual agency, empowerment, and sexual satiation through bodily kinaesthesia. By bodily kinaesthesia, I refer to how sentient bodies move and engage with the world through time and space through a form of ‘corporeal consciousness’ which produces their lived experiences of a globalising world.⁶ By embodied resistance, I mean the act of modifying one’s bodily practices such that ‘*motor* decisions’ are made that challenge cultural meanings in profound ways.⁷ This definition of resistance is important when considering that such kinaesthetic registrations of female sexual appetite in terms of food tread the line between the pornographic and the erotic. I will expand on this with reference to Cherrie L. Moraga and Audre Lorde later in this chapter. But I contend that the literary texts considered in this chapter also show kinaesthetic awareness of the movements of marginalised women sexually ‘eating’ one another and themselves in ways that resist existing heteronormative representations of female sexual appetite and that signify embodied practices of sexual satiation and empowerment.

GLOBALISED HETERONORMATIVITY

Before I go on to examine how representations of the satiation of female sexual appetite differ under globalised heteronormativity, I would like to address the notion of heteronormativity itself. I will also address it in relation to the different cultural contexts of the literary texts considered in this chapter.

Queer theorists Michael Warner and Laura Berlant offer this definition:

⁴ Carole M. Counihan, *The Anthropology of Food and Body: Gender, Meaning, and Power* (New York and London: Routledge, 1999), p. 9.

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 9.

⁶ Lisa Blackman, *The Body: The Key Concepts* (Oxford and New York: Berg, 2008), p. 83.

⁷ Carrie Noland, *Agency and Embodiment: Performing Gestures/Producing Culture* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2009), p. 3.

By heteronormativity we mean the institutions, structures of understanding, and practical orientations that make heterosexuality seem not only coherent—that is, organized as a sexuality—but also privileged. [...] It consists less of norms that could be summarized as a body of doctrine than of a sense of rightness produced in contradictory manifestations—often unconscious, immanent to practice or to institutions. Contexts that have little visible relation to sex practice, such as life narrative and generational identity, can be heteronormative in this sense, while in other contexts forms of sex between men and women might *not* be heteronormative. Heteronormativity is thus a concept distinct from heterosexuality. One of the most conspicuous differences is that it has no parallel, unlike heterosexuality, which organizes homosexuality as its opposite. Because homosexuality can never have the invisible, tacit, society-founding rightness that heterosexuality has, it would not be possible to speak of ‘homonormativity’ in the same sense.⁸

Warner further linked heteronormativity to contemporary globalisation, even as he acknowledged how lesbian and gay critics in other fields such as literary studies have had much to say about the opposition of hetero- and homosexualities:

we are only beginning to speculate about its embeddedness in modernity, colonialism, structures of civil society, ideologies of liberalism, and the like. [...] Yet it is clear enough that modernity has entailed the globalization of a new and exacting sexual order, so that the regime of sexuality that first transformed Europe has now been registered not only in the New World but in all the reaches of modern colonialism.⁹

From the extracts above, Warner and Berlant identified heteronormativity as the privileging of heterosexuality at the level of institutionalisation—heteronormativity becomes a globalising practice. Warner also saw heteronormativity as a global phenomenon going hand-in-hand with neo-colonialism, specifically qualifying his critique as a response to Western thought.¹⁰

⁸ Lauren Berlant and Michael Warner, ‘Sex in Public’, *Critical Inquiry*, 24.2 (1998), 547-66 (p. 548).

⁹ Michael Warner, ‘Introduction: Fear of a Queer Planet’, *Social Text*, 29 (1991), 3-17 (p. 7).

¹⁰ It should be noted that Warner himself conceded that it would be difficult to claim that a particular connection between modernity and hetero/homosexuality has been established, but that he was calling for questions to be asked in a sustained way. Warner, ‘Introduction: Fear of a Queer Planet’, p. 7. More recently, Peter Boellstorf and M. Jacqui Alexander have noted in their respective studies of how the globalisation of heteronormativity have been shaped through the nation state. Peter Boellstorf, ‘Some notes on new frontiers of sexuality and globalisation’, in *Understanding Global Sexualities: New Frontiers*, ed. by Peter Aggleton et al. (Oxford:

Considering the usefulness of heteronormativity as a frame of analysis for understanding international development work, Susie Jolly notes that Warner and Berlant's definition of heteronormativity is of its time.¹¹ Citing contemporary advances in Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender (LGBT) rights such as how same-sex partnership rights are now protected by law in various countries, Jolly observes that is now possible to speak of 'homonormativity'.¹² But Jolly also reminds us that, while Warner and Berlant spoke from their specific location in queer theory to emphasise the effects of heteronormativity in subordinating non-heterosexual people, they also recognised that heteronormativity was not just an LGBT issue: 'forms of sex between men and women might not be heteronormative'.¹³ She gives examples of this, particularly from non-Western contexts:

Many forms of relationship between women and men can contravene accepted norms and meet social hostility, state sanction, and even violence. What constitutes a 'subordinate' and penalized expression of heterosexuality varies from context to context. For some Indian families this might mean marriage between a Hindu and Muslim. In Palestine, it could mean a woman losing her virginity before marriage. In the UK, teenage pregnancy, buying and selling sex, and the fetish sex are generally characterised by media and the state as problems to be controlled, rather than valid expressions of desire.¹⁴

Here, Jolly forwards heterosexual behaviour that can still be considered non-heteronormative, and in a global context. Yet this still keeps her aligned with Warner. For despite his predominant use of the word 'queer' to refer to non-heterosexuality, Warner also asserted that 'queer' was 'a term defined against "normal" and generated precisely in the context of terror—[that] has the effect of pointing out a wide field of normalization, rather than simple intolerance, as the site of violence'.¹⁵ Warner, then, begins to offer an expanded understanding of what constitutes 'queer', which can include heterosexual behaviour that does not

Routledge, 2012), pp. 171-85. M. Jacqui Alexander, *Pedagogies of Crossing: Meditations on Feminism, Sexual Politics, Memory, and the Sacred* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2005).

¹¹ Susie Jolly, 'Why is development work so straight? Heteronormativity in the international development industry', *Development in Practice*, 21.1 (2011), 18-28 (p. 20).

¹² *Ibid.*, p. 20.

¹³ *Ibid.*, p. 20.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 21.

¹⁵ Warner, 'Introduction: Fear of a Queer Planet', p. 16.

conform to heteronormativity. The examples considered in this chapter fall under such non-heteronormativity.

Another important point that Jolly makes is that heteronormativity ‘can tell us something not only about subordinated forms of sexuality, but also about the practices and culture of dominant forms’¹⁶. Gender stereotypes and the creation of the gender dichotomy are very much part of the story, and she cites Warner’s presentation of the image of the two people inscribed on a pictorial plaque on the NASA Pioneer 10 Spacecraft to project an image of humanity to beings from other star systems who might encounter it.¹⁷ Warner’s description of the image exemplifies the gender stereotypes of the white, middle class man and woman that heteronormativity determines:

They depict—if you share the imaging conventions of postwar US culture—a man and a woman. They are not just sexually different; they are sexual difference itself. They are nude and have no body hair; the woman has no genitals; their heads are neatly coiffed according to the gender norms of middle class young adults. The man stands square, while the woman leans one hip slightly forward.¹⁸

These are gender stereotypes that the literary texts challenge, for they reveal other gender stereotypes that emerge from this, such as the oversexed black woman.

Citing Stevi Jackson, Jolly notes that heteronormativity’s relevance to normative and non-normative relations has also been developed in feminist studies:

Feminists, because they are concerned with the ways in which heterosexuality depends upon and guarantees gender division, are far more interested in the institutionalization and everyday practice of heterosexual relations.¹⁹

¹⁶ Jolly, p. 21.

¹⁷ Warner, ‘Introduction: Fear of a Queer Planet’, p. 21.

¹⁸ Michael Warner, *Fear of a Queer Planet* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1993), p. 23.

¹⁹ Stevi Jackson, ‘The social complexity of heteronormativity: gender, sexuality and heterosexuality’, lecture at the international conference ‘Heteronormativity—A Fruitful Concept?’ Trondheim, 2-4 June (2015), p. 2. Cited in Jolly, p. 21.

Jolly follows Jackson's emphasis that analysis of heteronormativity should consider both sexuality and gender are regulated.²⁰ But Chrys Ingraham also raises the point that as we move into the twenty-first century, there is increasing evidence that a body-based model of gender is slippery—for we understand more fully how gender and sexuality operate flexibly and variably over the lifespan.²¹ My primary focus in this chapter is on the bodily dynamics of non-heteronormative representations of female sexual appetite as resistance, rather than how gender is performed. Nevertheless, undercutting my analysis' attentiveness to how gender division is enforced through heteronormativity is the sense that heteronormativity also determines gender constructions.

As I will also be analysing a South Korean text, I would like to address another possible point of contention: that Warner's notion of heteronormativity comes across as Western-centric, particularly from America. Jolly does probe the question of whether non-Western ideologies can be analysed under the theoretical framework of heteronormativity, such as that of Confucianism—an influential mode of thought in China, Korea, and Japan that has been described as 'the most patriarchal of all the normative systems of the world'²⁴ and that will be referenced later—which she notes to enshrine women's obedience to men as part of the natural order. She points out that Confucianism locates the husband-wife couple as just one link in the relations of duty to the extended family, society, and state, begging the questions:

Does heteronormativity as a frame of analysis give too much emphasis to heterosexuality when this is not taken to be the central relationship underpinning social order? Does the concept of heteronormativity come

²⁰ Jolly, p. 21.

²¹ Ingraham's point about the slipperiness of a body-based model of gender might seem to challenge my contention that a literary analysis of non-heteronormative representations of the satiation of female sexual appetites with kinaesthetic awareness of their body movements enables us to register erotic resistance against heteronormativity. But Ingraham's reference to this slipperiness really calls for a dynamic reading of body-based gender and sexual performance that is not biologically deterministic, but rather, 'start[s] from the assumption of human behaviour as variable'—which aligns with my analysis. She states: 'We can study the prevalence of eating disorders or sexual or domestic violence only to discover that they are not about the body but about how we give meaning to the body. [...] The materiality of the body is instead about power, the division of labor, and the distribution of economic resources—not the body itself.' Chrys Ingraham, 'Thinking Straight, Acting Bent: Heteronormativity and Homosexuality', in *Handbook of Gender and Women's Studies*, ed. by Kathy Davis, Mary Evans and Judith Lorber (London: Sage Publications, 2006), pp. 307-321 (pp. 310-20).

²⁴ Göran Therborn, *Between Sex and Power: Family in the World, 1900-2000* (London: Routledge, 2004), p. 119. Cited in Jolly, p. 22.

from a preoccupation with ‘Western-style intimacy’, norms of heteronuclear family, and ‘individualism...free choice of marriage partners and the idea that marriage should be based on love for another who complements and completes the self’?²⁵

Despite these questions, Jolly ultimately finds heteronormativity as continuing to be a useful concept in transnational contexts. For she finds that thinking about heteronormativity in non-Western contexts can expand its scope.

This is reflected in her alignment with Jaya Sharma’s critical re-definition of heteronormativity:

I would understand heteronormativity to refer to those norms related to gender and sexuality which keep in place patriarchy and compulsory heterosexuality as well as other systems and ideologies related to power such as religious fundamentalism, casteism, the class system and so on.²⁶

It is this expanded concept of heteronormativity that I work with in this chapter, specifically in considering how the lived experience of heteronormativity in neo-colonial globalisation manifests in practices of suppressing female sexual appetite as depicted in the literary texts considered.

OUR DEEPEST CRAVINGS

As mentioned earlier, Ensler’s attempt to convey female sexual empowerment merely through the aural of moans produced by the mouth failed because, for her lesbian interviewee, the moans did not authentically capture the lived experience of the sexual act. This failure was due to Ensler starting from the heteronormative conception that explicit representations of the female body in sexual arousal are ‘titillating’ and exploitative, rather than erotic and nourishing. Indeed, by telling Ensler that she did not feel that the piece about these moans ‘really had anything to do with her [...] she didn’t see herself in it’ (p. 113), Ensler’s lesbian interviewee gives voice to a hollowness behind these moans, even a silence. To understand this silence in relation to food, female

²⁵ Jolly, pp. 22-23.

²⁶ Jaya Sharma, ‘Reflections on the construction of heteronormativity’, *Development*, 52.1 (2009), 52-55 (p. 53). Cited in Jolly, p. 23.

sexual appetite, and globalised heteronormativity in bodily terms, we can look to the Chicana lesbian writer Cherrie L. Moraga.

In her volume of essays and poetry *Loving in the War Years*, Moraga writes:

I had known for years that I was a lesbian, had felt it in my bones, had ached with the knowledge, gone crazed with the knowledge, wallowed in the silence of it. Silence *is* like starvation. Don't be fooled. It's nothing short of that, and felt most sharply when one has had a full belly most of her life.²⁷

We see that Moraga equates her life as a closeted lesbian struggling to keep her sexual identity a secret to that of bodily starvation. Julia C. Ehrhardt observes that Moraga goes on to embrace the figure of the hungry woman as the essence of Chicana lesbian narrative: 'She is the story that has never been told truly, the story of that hungry Mexican woman who has been called puta/bruja/jota/loca ['whore, witch, dyke, crazy'] because she refuses to forget that her half-life is not a natural-born fact.'²⁸

In her study of Chicana lesbian poetry and the ways in which they disrupt the heteronormative construction of the Chicana kitchen and cook, Ehrhardt observes these poets similarly figure lesbians as hungry women who deserve to have their physical and sexual appetites fulfilled, rather than as women who must deny their own hunger so that she may feed others first under heteronormative food practices.²⁹ Ehrhardt notes that these poets show hungry lesbian women as feeding themselves and satiating their own sexual appetites by employing in their poems traditional Chicano foods to depict lesbian sexual desire, to refer to female body parts, and to metaphorise lesbian sex.³⁰ In doing so, Ehrhardt argues that these poets turn the tables on heteronormative food practices by perverting the Chicana's traditional culinary gender role, configuring the lesbian as food eater in addition to food preparer.³¹ She goes on to consider literary

²⁷ Cherrie L. Moraga, *Loving in the War Years: lo que nunca pasó por sus labios* (Cambridge, MA: South End Press, 2000), p. 44.

²⁸ Moraga, p. 147. Cited in Julia C. Ehrhardt, 'Towards Queering Food Studies: Foodways, Heteronormativity, and the Hungry Women in Chicana Lesbian Writing', *Food and Foodways*, 14.2 (2006), 91-109 (p. 96).

²⁹ Ehrhardt, pp. 94-96.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 95.

³¹ *Ibid.*, p. 96.

representations of hungry Chicana lesbians using their relationships with food to assert their queer sexuality against various heteronormative social institutions that define and control their sexuality, including patriarchy.³²

This chapter is not concerned with how the female protagonists of the novels considered assert their ‘queer sexuality’, but it remains aligned in its interest in non-heteronormative representations of female sexual satiation that resist heteronormative suppression of female sexual appetites. Also differing from Ehrhardt is my interest in how the authors of these novels represent these non-heteronormative practices of female sexual satiation via bodily kinaesthesia—they stay attentive to the lived experience of how bodies ‘eat’ one another and themselves with sexual pleasure. However, as Ensler reminds us, such representations come up against the question of the erotic versus the pornographic; Moraga herself shows awareness of the fine line that her configuring of the lesbian as hungry woman treads between the two. To distinguish between the erotic versus the pornographic, we can look to African-American lesbian poet Audre Lorde.

In her seminal article ‘Uses of the Erotic: The Erotic as Power’ (1978), Lorde has argued that the erotic has been misnamed and used against women under patriarchy such as to confuse it with its opposite, the pornographic.³³ Seeing the erotic and the pornographic as ‘two diametrically opposed uses of the sexual’, Lorde considered the pornographic to be ‘a direct denial of the power of the erotic, for it represents the suppression of true feeling. Pornography emphasises sensation without feeling.’³⁴ Of the erotic, she stated: ‘the erotic is not a question only of what we do; it is a question of how acutely and fully we can feel in the doing’³⁵. It is, then, the affective dimension of the erotic that distinguishes it from the pornographic, which resonates with bodily kinaesthesia. Indeed, Lorde describes how the erotic functions for her with kinaesthetic awareness, comparing it to dancing: ‘In the way my body stretches to music and opens in response, hearkening to its deepest rhythms, so every level upon which I

³² Ehrhardt, p. 96.

³³ Audre Lorde, ‘The Uses of the Erotic: The Erotic as Power’, in *Sister Outsider* (Berkeley: The Crossing Press, 1984), pp. 53-59 (p. 54).

³⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 54-55.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 54.

sense also opens to the erotically satisfying experience³⁶. Attending to literary representations of bodily kinaesthesia thus enables us to distinguish between the pornographic and the erotic, and to register erotic bodily practices of sexual agency. For Lorde ultimately asserts the erotic to be a source of empowerment for women who are marginalised under patriarchal heteronormativity, particularly for women of colour and lesbian women, in that it recognises the satiation of female sexual appetite as nourishing rather than titillating—as ways of feeding their ‘deepest cravings’³⁷ which have been suppressed.

Contemporary literary texts such as Caribbean writer Jamaica Kincaid’s novel *Lucy* (1990)³⁸ and Korean writer Han Kang’s novel *The Vegetarian* (2015)³⁹ show kinaesthetic awareness of how women who are marginalised under heteronormativity in neo-colonial globalisation have their sexual appetites suppressed, as hungry women. Both authors show how this suppression of female sexual appetite is enacted amid the neo-colonial heteronormative household, particularly in eating spaces like the dinner table and the kitchen. Simultaneously, both authors show these women as resisting this suppression by satiating their sexual appetites. Like Ensler, Kincaid and Han render their female protagonists as sexually satiating and ‘feeding’ themselves by ‘eating’ their own bodies—a practice that is sometimes enacted through their ‘eating’ of other bodies, male and female alike—as well as by refusing to ‘eat’ certain other bodies. Both authors also go further in their own ways to alter heteronormative conceptions of sexual ‘hunger’ and sexual ‘appetite’, by exposing them as fantasy and by radically changing the chemistry of one’s body respectively.

This chapter contends that it is the kinaesthetic way in which Kincaid and Han register these movements of bodies ‘eating’ one another and ‘feeding’ themselves that render these practices of sexual satiation as nourishing and erotic—and therefore as empowering resistance—rather than as titillating and pornographic. Both writers also show awareness of how their depictions of the satiation of female sexual appetites as resistance trouble the line between the two—the eponymous heroine of Kincaid’s novel calls herself a ‘slut’ as she

³⁶ Lorde, p. 56.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 57.

³⁸ Jamaica Kincaid, *Lucy* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1990). Further references are given after quotations in the text.

³⁹ Han Kang, *The Vegetarian*, trans. by Deborah Smith (London: Portobello Books, 2015). Further references are given after quotations in the text.

sexually ‘feeds’ herself, while Han’s female protagonist is configured as a contemporary Korean comfort woman, even as she attempts to divest her own body of carnal desire through vegetarianism. But we also see that these non-heteronormative practices of female sexual satiation eventually dismantle neo-colonial heteronormative structures, as well as awaken other women to their own hunger. By attending to Kincaid and Han’s kinaesthetic representations of these movements of ‘eating’ bodies, we see how women who are marginalised under heteronormativity in neo-colonial globalisation resist the universal global practices that keep them silent and starving and enact local, particular bodily practices of female sexual agency and empowerment that enables them to realise what they are *hungry for*. In this sense, bodily resistance in the form of the erotic and conveyed kinaesthetically as a kind of *nourishment* thus suggests empowerment for their female protagonists. From the two novels below, we see how this bodily resistances play out.

EXPLORATORY QUEERNESS

Kincaid’s novel *Lucy* tells of the sexual experiences of a teenage girl from the West Indies—the eponymous narrator—who leaves home to be an *au pair* to an affluent white couple in North America. Experiencing an independent life in a foreign land, Lucy has erotic encounters with both men and women that make her recall the suppression of her own sexual appetite back home. Drawn together from past and present, from the Caribbean and America, Lucy’s erotic encounters with men and women in her new location can be understood as exemplifying a kinaesthetic practice of sexual satiation that resists globalised heteronormative suppression of her sexual appetite. Reading *Lucy* from a queer perspective, Akash Nikolas has noted that Lucy displays a kind of ‘exploratory queerness’—a fitting description of Lucy’s non-heteronormative kinaesthetic practice of sexual satiation that is tied to her migration from the Caribbean to America.⁴⁰ Specifically, Kincaid presents this kinaesthetic practice by rendering Lucy’s lived experiences of these erotic encounters in terms of the flesh as food.

⁴⁰ Nikolas extracts this notion of exploratory queerness from Keja Valens’ queer-reading of another of Kincaid’s novels, *Annie John* (1985). Focusing on sexual development from the angle

We can consider how these elements of erotic kinaesthesia (where the flesh is food), heteronormativity, neo-colonialism, and migration intersect by examining how Lucy erotically satiates herself through her sexual liaisons with her male lovers at her new location. We can first consider her dalliance with the young American man Hugh, a family friend of her employers. On their last night together, Lucy tells us: ‘As I kissed Hugh, my tongue reaching to caress the roof of his mouth, I thought of all the other tongues I held in my mouth in this way’ (p. 82). She subsequently lists the other tongues that belong to male and female bodies from Lucy’s sexual past and present, in the West Indies and in America.

There is, firstly, the tongue belonging to Tanner, a boy from back home with whom Lucy has her first sexual experience (p. 82). Lucy describes her experience kissing Tanner as ‘sucking on poor Tanner’s tongue as if it were an old Frozen Joy with all its flavor run out and nothing left but the ice’; she also learns here that ‘Taste is not the thing to seek out in a tongue; how it makes you feel—that is the thing’ (pp. 43-44). Then, there is Lucy’s best girlfriend from school whom she would kiss ‘for practice’ (p. 83). There is also the tongue of another boy from back home whom Lucy ‘used to kiss in the library and continued to kiss long after I had ceased to care about him one way or the other, just to see how undone he could become by my kisses’ (p. 83). Finally, there is Peggy—Lucy’s closest female friend in America—with whom she kisses after their unfruitful encounter with a male stranger: ‘We were so disappointed that we went back to my room and smoked marijuana and kissed each other until we

of sex education, Valens considers *Annie John* to explicate ‘a narrative of desire between Antiguan schoolgirls who sex-educate themselves by experimenting on each other and mimic heterosexual relationships through cyclical friendships’—these experimental practices do crop up in *Lucy*. According to Valens, such practices constitute ‘a temporary stage in a developmental sequence’ that West Indian girls eventually outgrow. Yet Nikolas asserts in his article that Lucy does not outgrow this stage in the developmental sequence, and is interested in the implications of Lucy’s exploratory queerness for adulthood. More specifically, he contextualises this queerness amid Lucy’s transnational migration, in order to argue that ‘queer West Indian girls who do not want to grow straight migrate to become queer women’. Nikolas subsequently clarifies that his aim is not to ‘out’ Lucy but rather ‘to explore the ways in which Kincaid accounts for and gives voice to queer desire among such women’. I follow this sentiment, as my aim in this chapter as mentioned earlier is not to determine Lucy’s queerness. Rather, even as my own reading of *Lucy* also takes into account her sexual development and her transnational relocation, my focus is on how Lucy’s practice of erotically ‘feeding’ herself as she ‘eats’ the bodies of her various partners resist the suppression of her sexual appetite under heteronormativity in neo-colonial globalisation. Akash Nikolas, ‘Straight Growth and the Imperial Alternative: Queer-Reading Jamaica Kincaid’, *African American Review*, 50.1 (2017), 59-73 (p. 59). Keja Valens, ‘Obvious and Ordinary: Desire between Girls in Jamaica Kincaid’s *Annie John*’, *Frontiers: A Journal of Women Studies*, 25.2 (2004), 123-49.

were exhausted and fell asleep. Her tongue was narrow and pointed and soft.’ (p. 83)

By representing Lucy’s own lived experience of ‘eating’ or kissing Hugh as a kinaesthetic practice whereby the emphasis is placed on ‘how it makes you feel’, Kincaid shows Lucy as resisting this global determination of her body as moving for the purpose of sensation, offering sexual pleasure for the American male traveller. Lucy’s relationship with Hugh is layered with neo-colonial heteronormative notions, because even as she is sexually open with him, she is also seen ‘the girl’ from ‘the islands’ (p. 65) whom Western male travellers would have fun with—that is, as someone whose body fulfills global Western male sexual appetites, especially now that her being an *au pair* has brought her physically closer to these American men for their sexual pleasure through neo-colonial networks of female migrant labour, therefore exemplifying the gender stereotype of the oversexed black woman who silently exists to feed Western sexual desires.

In contrast, Lucy’s practice of gaining erotic pleasure shows her modifying her sexual behaviour, as her exploratory ‘eating’ of the tongues of other male and female bodies becomes so sexually arousing that it even brings about orgasmic release—allowing her to experience sensual feeling. These same-sex and heterosexual desires are equalised under Lucy’s erotic consumption, coming across as ordinary, familiar, and commonplace⁴⁶. In her study of Kincaid’s portrayal of desire between women in *Annie John*, Keja Valens argues that this desire ‘does not oppose a heterosexual norm; it simply pluralizes it. It does so not by supplanting or even supplementing desire between women and men but by shifting the focus, so that we consider not what is wrong [...] about desire between women and men but instead what is right [...] about desire between women’⁴⁷. The same can be said for *Lucy*, in that Lucy’s ‘exploratory queerness’ with ‘eating’ male and female tongues challenges heteronormativity by diversifying its manifestations. Lucy’s non-heteronormative erotic practice thus begins to express particular Caribbean sexual desires that have been silenced under globalisation. In this sense, Kincaid presents Lucy as a different kind of sexual traveller from Hugh.

⁴⁶ Valens, p. 123.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 123.

At this point, whether Kincaid shows Lucy's sexual resistance to be effective or not against globalised heteronormativity can be called into question. Kincaid is certainly aware that Lucy's resistance (via the modification of her sexual behaviour) can inadvertently perpetuate the pornographic representation and consumption of her body. We see this from the fact that Lucy identifies as a 'slut' (p. 127), showing her awareness that her erotic 'eating' practices can be construed as titillating and pornographic. But I argue that it is Kincaid's emphasis on the sensual feeling that Lucy experiences from her sexual relationships—uncovering the sensory pleasure of sex by enmeshing it with the sensory pleasure of eating⁴⁸—that resists and reconfigures the negative, pornographic associations with the figure of the 'slut' as merely movement for sensation. As Kristen Mahlis points out, Lucy enters these sexual relationships 'according to the dictates of her body as a locus of sensory pleasure'⁴⁹. Consequently, the pleasure that Lucy experiences from her kinaesthetic practice of 'eating' the flesh of her lovers enables her to corporeally access 'the erotic as a source of power and information'⁵⁰. As Lorde states:

For the erotic is not a question only of what we do; it is a question of how acutely and fully we can feel in the doing. Once we know the extent to which we are capable of feeling that sense of satisfaction and completion, we can then observe which of our various life endeavors brings us closest to that fullness.⁵¹

This feeling of erotic pleasure is a source of power that enables Lucy to resist through her bodily practice and make motor decisions that challenge cultural meanings in profound ways. And it is this erotic pleasure that Lucy experiences through bodily kinaesthesia—whereby Kincaid represents the flesh as food—that helps her resist against globalised heteronormativity that determines her as a 'slut'. We will proceed to see the effects of this resistance in the following sections.

⁴⁸ Kristen Mahlis, 'Gender and Exile: Jamaica Kincaid's *Lucy*', *Modern Fiction Studies*, 44.1 (1998), 164-183 (p. 177).

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 176.

⁵⁰ Lorde, p. 54.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 54-55.

TABLE MANNERS

Before I further examine the effects of Lucy's resistance, however, I want to unpack her experience of being a slut. In this section, I will show that Kincaid contextualises Lucy's slut identity within neo-colonial heteronormativity, specifically as this plays out within the heteronormative family unit in Antigua and North America. At the level of the heteronormative family unit, we will see how global heteronormative practices silence Lucy's sexual desires. Kincaid presents such acts of suppression as an experience of starvation.

'Slut' is the name that Lucy gives herself in a 'cold letter' that she sends from America to her mother who remains in the West Indies, after the former learns about her father's death for the first time (p. 127). Lucy sees her mother as having compromised herself, by submitting to a marriage for the sake of complying with heteronormative societal standards:

When my mother married my father, he was an old man and she a young woman. This suited them both. She had someone who would leave her alone yet not cause her to lose face in front of other women; he had someone who would take care of him in his dotage. [...] I could see that, in marrying a man, my mother had thought very hard not so much about happiness as about her own peace of mind.

(p. 81)

Lucy writes her letter to berate her mother for being bound to such heteronormative societal standards even when widowed, having 'married a man who would die and leave her in debt even for his own burial. I pointed out the ways she had betrayed herself. I said I believed she had betrayed me also' (p. 127). Lucy's sense of personal betrayal from her mother's marriage, then, emanates from the fact that within the Antiguan heteronormative family unit, Lucy's mother perpetuates the heteronormative suppression of her daughter's sexual appetite and pleasure. In turn, Lucy writes in her letter:

I reminded her that my whole upbringing had been devoted to preventing me from becoming a slut; I then gave a brief description of my personal life, offering each detail as evidence that my upbringing had been a failure and that, in fact, life as a slut was quite enjoyable, thank you very much.

(pp. 127-28)

Lucy's declaration of her new sexual status as a slut thus re-appropriates the heteronormative construction of overt displays of female sexual appetite as pornographic, for her own erotic resistance.

Kincaid suggests such heteronormative constructions as being rooted in the colonial enforcement of sexual norms, such as to produce the historical stereotype of the over-sexed black woman or 'a slut'. Valens draws links between Caribbean heterosexuality and colonial heteronormativity, stating that:

The roots of heterosexuality in the Caribbean certainly reach beyond the history of conquest and colonialism, but while male-female relationships are extremely common throughout the Caribbean, they do not always take on the same institutional or symbolic roles that they do in Europe, more specifically in colonial England. The insistence on heterosexuality as the norm that can and must not be violated—and its concomitant regulation of the boundaries of gender and family roles—belongs to a Victorian morality whose imposition forms part of British colonialism.⁵²

In this sense, colonial heteronormativity is institutionalised Victorian morality that privileged the virginal ideal of the woman as the 'Angel in the House'⁵³—which both Mariah and Lucy's mother embody in their respective ways in North America and Antigua under global neo-colonialism. As Lucy's letter indicates, it is her mother who perpetuates the suppression of female sexual appetite under neo-colonial heteronormativity—thus Lucy's experience of starvation—as well as the construction of any overt displays of sexual hunger as pornographic.

Lucy's lived experience of starvation is exemplified in her ladylike manners. These manners are trained by her mother within the heteronormative family unit in the Caribbean, which we later see Lucy rehearsing during her first encounter with another American man, Paul (who eventually becomes her lover). Lucy describes this encounter thus: 'His name was Paul. I said, "How are you?" in a small proper voice, the voice of the girl my mother had hoped I would be: clean, virginal, beyond reproach.' (p. 97) In an interview, Kincaid has stated that her contentious relationship with her own mother—the autobiographical

⁵² Valens, p. 124.

⁵³ A phrase inaugurated by Coventry Patmore in his 1854 poem of the same name, the 'Angel in the House' put forward the model of women as domestic and innocent, confined to their homes, where they could keep their chastity and be a beacon of morality for their husbands. Coventry Patmore, 'The Angel in the House', in *The Broadview Anthology of Victorian Poetry and Poetic Theory*, ed. by Thomas J. Collins and Vivienne J. Rundle (Peterborough: Broadview, 1999), pp. 743-44.

influences of which can be detected in Lucy's relationship with her mother—was based on 'being told I should be something, and then my whole upbringing was something I was not: it was English. It was sort of a middle-class English upbringing—I mean, I had the best table manners you ever saw.'⁵⁴ This parallel between Kincaid's 'table manners' and Lucy's ladylike, 'virginal' manners links colonial and neo-colonial heteronormative constructions of female sexual desire with food and eating. The sense of propriety that 'table manners' assume also suggests more concern with how the bodily satiation of sexual appetite looks like, and less with the sensual enjoyment of eating—recalling Lorde's differentiation between the pornographic and the erotic as 'sensation' rather than 'feeling'. Consequently, these 'table manners' also signify the power imbalance between 'white manners of eating, and black modes of eating', whereby Caribbean locals 'eat differently from whites and need to be trained into white ways of eating'.⁵⁵ As 'normative ideas of eating directly transposed from white experience'⁵⁶ are instilled into black bodies through these table manners, black modes of eating—and thus black modes of gaining erotic pleasure—are suppressed and silenced, suggesting the experience of starvation.

Practices that enact other ways of eating and of gaining erotic pleasure, then, become seen as 'slutty' behaviour. In the novel, it is intimated that on more than one occasion, Lucy's ladylike manners belie her inner sexual hunger or 'deepest cravings', and that by being in America and away from her mother, Lucy can now openly satiate her sexual appetite in non-heteronormative ways. We have already begun to see this with Hugh. Similarly, Lucy tells us that despite her polite manners with Paul:

I felt the opposite of that, for when he held my hand and kissed me on the cheek, I felt instantly deliciously strange; I wanted to be naked in a bed with him.

(p. 97)

Simultaneously, in America, Lucy's practices of sexual satiation still troubles the line between the pornographic and the erotic, as we see how her determination to

⁵⁴ Selwyn R. Cudjoe, 'Jamaica Kincaid and the Modernist Project: An Interview', *Callaloo*, 29 (1989), 396-411 (pp. 400-01).

⁵⁵ Elspeth Probyn, *Carnal Appetites: FoodSexIdentities* (London: Routledge, 2000), p. 113.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 113.

be involved with Paul is in defiance of Peggy, who warns her that he is ‘a pervert’ (p. 97).

We are not provided with a reason for Peggy’s opinion, but Lucy ventures a guess: ‘He might have tried to kiss her; she hated men to kiss her unless their mouths tasted of cigarettes.’ (p. 97) Kincaid connects Paul’s perversity to pornography and exploitation, as it is implied that he might have forced himself upon Peggy, making her ‘eat’ his body when her ‘deepest cravings’ were different. In turn, Lucy’s determination to ‘eat’ Paul, despite his sexual behaviour towards her friend, seemingly demonstrates her own ‘sluttiness’. This sense of Lucy wanting to ‘eat’ Paul can be seen in Kincaid’s use of striking genitalia imagery, showing Lucy as wanting to have Paul’s penis in her mouth:

I had never chosen the company of a man over hers. I had never chosen anyone over her. She said, ‘Can’t you see from his hands he’s bound to have a small prick?’ I wanted to say, ‘Well, it should fit very nicely in my mouth, then,’ but I could not bear for that to be the last thing we said to each other, and surely it would have been.

(p. 101)

While this may seem that Lucy is conforming to the heteronormative construction of the hungry woman as a whore—to recall Moraga—I argue in the following sections that Kincaid ultimately represents Lucy’s ‘sluttiness’ with kinaesthetic awareness as to how the latter sensually and erotically satiates her sexual appetite in ways that resists these ‘table manners’. In the next section, we will see that Lucy resists these ‘table manners’ of how sexual appetite is supposed to look like by eating or ‘devouring’ Paul’s body—a description that emphasises the sensual enjoyment of eating, and which shows her modifying her bodily behaviour. I will also consider the effectiveness of Lucy’s resistance as Kincaid presents Paul as a ‘pervert’—a term which connotes abnormality and unacceptability. In this way, Kincaid makes Lucy’s resistance even more transgressive and non-heteronormative.

RAINWATER

Kincaid does not give us direct physical detail about Lucy and Paul's sexual liaisons. But Lucy divulges them to Mariah, her employer, over the kitchen table, reinforcing associations amongst sex, body, and food (p. 113). Lucy notes that the kitchen table is 'where we always found ourselves if we had to talk about anything at all' (p. 113)—a place associated with food and consumption, but which is also more casual than the dining table and thus not requiring 'table manners'. Recalling Lucy's mother and Mariah as 'Angels in the House', we will see in this section how Lucy's act of sharing her erotic practices of sexual satiation with her employer over the kitchen table in America suggests a neo-Victorian subversion of female domesticity in the kitchen—the site of heteronormative constructions of displays of female sexual desire in terms of propriety.

Kincaid's presentation of Lucy's experience shows kinaesthetic awareness of bodies sensually 'eating' each other's flesh during sexual intercourse:

I began to tell her about my life with Paul, which was spent almost entirely in his bed. I told her everything that we did, all the small details that to someone with more experience of the world would have gone unnoticed. There was much to take note of; except for eating, all the time we spent together was devoted to sex. I told her what everything felt like, how surprised I was thrilled by the violence of it (for sometimes it was that, violent), what an adventure this part of my life had become, and how much I looked forward to it, because I had not known that such pleasure could exist and, what was more, be available to me.

(p. 113)

We see Kincaid's kinaesthetic representation of the sexual movements of Lucy and Paul's bodies, as they 'devour' each other's flesh as food—'except for eating, all the time we spent together was devoted to sex'. That Lucy experiences a form of sexual pleasure that she never thought would have been 'available' to her is also suggestive in relation to her erotic nourishment and resistance, which I will examine below.

The sexual pleasure now available to Lucy in America fills in a lost opportunity that she had during her childhood in the West Indies to resist the

heteronormative suppression of her sexual appetite. This can be seen in how Kincaid draws sexual parallels between the bodies of Paul and Mr. Thomas, a fisherman from back home, who had been lost at sea: 'And so it was that hands I would come to know very well—Paul's hands, moving about in the fish tank—reminded me of some other hands lost forever in a warm sea' (p. 109). Thomas figures in a transformational story of Lucy's youth, for in the event of his death, she finds out that he had been paying Myrna, a local girl, to 'put his middle finger up inside her' (p. 104). Lucy's main reactions to this story are jealousy and the feeling of being cheated of her destiny to satiate her sexual hunger—sensations that she notably renders in terms of eating, or in this case, drinking:

I, of course, had many feelings about this amazing story—all the predictable ones—but then one feeling came to dominate the others: I was almost overcome with jealousy. Why had such an extraordinary thing happened to her and not me? Myrna spoke of this in a flat, uninterested way, as if all they had done was share a cup of fresh rainwater together. This would have been the experience of my life, the one all others would have to live up to. What a waste!

(p. 105)

Lucy deduces that the reason that Myrna was chosen over her for this secret rendezvous was because of the former's ladylike manners (p. 107). We are told that Thomas called her 'Little Miss' and had laughed at her old world courteousness, seeing her as 'a teenage girl so beyond reproach in every way that if you asked her a question she would reply in her mother's forty-year-old voice—hardly a prospect for a secret rendezvous' (p. 107). Paul, then, as another 'pervert', offers a male body through which Lucy can reclaim this missed opportunity to sexually satiate herself and to sensually create for herself 'the experience of my life, the one all others would have to live up to'—that is, a non-heteronormative kinaesthetic practice that is not determined by globalised neo-colonialism. It is this renewed opportunity to sexually satiate herself—under her new identity as a 'slut' which she re-appropriates for her erotic resistance—as she and Paul 'devour' each other's bodies unlike the banal sharing of a cup of fresh rainwater, that Lucy gains a sense of pleasure from. In doing so, Lucy kinaesthetically expresses particular Caribbean experiences of sexual desire that are silenced, for as she and Paul 'devour' each other's bodies, their sexual

activity allows her to experience the erotic pleasure that was suppressed in Myrna's account: 'She had made no mention of kiss on the hair, fierce tongue in her ear or mouth, kisses on the neck, hands caressing breasts' (p. 108)—a description that can just as well constitute Lucy's own sexual experience with Paul as they 'eat' each others' bodies. Lucy's further observations that the money Thomas was paying Myrna was 'beside the point. I am sure I would have give it away' or that she would have found a way to steal some money to pay Thomas to be in Myrna's shoes also emphasises Lucy's own agency in sexually satiating herself, and that it was due to heteronormative constructions of such sexual hunger that construed her display of sexual agency as a 'slut' (pp. 105-06).

I recognise that Thomas and Paul—whom Kincaid presents as 'perverts'—can make Lucy's resistance contentious because of its association with sexual exploitation. But I argue that Lucy's resistance is effective precisely because she intimately engages with this exploitation of her body. To understand how this bodily engagement works, we can consider the lived experience of sexual perversion at the level of the body by going back to Peggy's experience with Paul. As mentioned earlier, Peggy's experience with Paul is 'perverted' and connected to pornography and exploitation because Kincaid implies that Paul might have forced himself upon Peggy, making her 'eat' and gain sensual enjoyment from his body when her 'deepest cravings' were different. In this sense, Kincaid parallels this practice of sexual perversion with the act of forcing someone to eat something in a certain way, so as to induce the feeling of erotic pleasure when that person's 'deepest cravings' are different. This act recalls the way in which Lucy learns her 'virginal' 'table manners' from her mother.

Being that Lucy's own sexual desires are silenced through her 'table manners', her response of 'devouring' Paul's flesh as food—wherein she modifies her behaviour—signifies her erotically 'feeding' or 'nourishing' herself. For it is through this kinaesthetic practice that she induces the sensual feeling of local erotic desires that have been suppressed. In doing so, Lucy practises acute 'motor intentionality' in her resistance—'the dynamic engagement of the body in a specific context that invites subjects to effect change' through a 'somatic mode of attention that is designed to alert us to the *qualities*, not the results, of our

acts'.⁵⁹ We have already begun to hear this 'motor intentionality' from Lucy's earlier description of her desire to be sexually involved with Paul:

I wanted to be naked in a bed with him. And I wanted to see what he really looked like, not his reflection in a pool whose surface has just been disturbed.

(p. 97)

This description suggests that it is through Lucy's sexual activity with Paul—consuming each other's flesh as food—that Lucy can get to the bodily sense of what makes men like Paul exploit and consume her pornographically, even if the price of her resistance is for her to come across as a slut. Indeed, in the next section, we see that it is through this acute feeling that Lucy uncovers Paul's nakedness—that this is all a charade.

Simultaneously, this 'motor intentionality' is part of Lucy's interaction with Mariah who, apart from being her employer, is also presented as Lucy's foster mother: 'The times that I loved Mariah it was because she reminded me of my mother. The times that I did not love Mariah it was because she reminded me of my mother.' (p. 58) This is because Mariah's admission of her experience of 'bad sex' (as holding up the heteronormative order) informs Lucy's understanding of her own relationship with Paul as a charade (which is also tied with her mother's own troubles in her heteronormative relationship with her father). Over the kitchen table, then, Lucy shares with Mariah her lived experience of alternative sexual satiation that she would not have been able to tell her own mother, because 'for some reason not clear to me, it was not allowed' (p. 60)—another reference to the question of propriety in relation to overt and 'sensational' representations of female sexual appetite. In doing so, Lucy kinaesthetically expresses particular desires that were suppressed within the Caribbean family unit at her new American locality, thus resisting globalised heteronormativity.

⁵⁹ Noland, pp. 4-6.

SPOILED AND SUGAR APPLES

In this section, we will look more closely at how Lucy's interaction with Mariah works to dismantle how men like Paul represent women's bodies pornographically. Kincaid suggests that such pornographic representations of women's bodies have disastrous effects in suppressing women's sexual hunger. This effect of Lucy's erotic agency can be registered in how her practices of sexual pleasure across the kitchen table provoke Mariah's admission of her own 'bad sex' (p. 113) in her marriage—a marriage that is crumbling because of Lewis's infidelity with her best friend, Dinah (p. 79). Lucy understands this 'bad sex' in terms of food and consumption:

as soon as she said it I knew what she meant: it was like wanting a sugar apple and getting a spoiled one; and while you're eating the spoiled one, the memory of a good-tasting one will not go away.

(p. 114)

In fact, Lewis's infidelity recalls the numerous infidelities of Lucy's father that her mother had to deal with, being bound to the heteronormativity of her own marriage (p. 48), thus showing the global scale of neo-colonial heteronormativity. Lucy's sex with Paul revises this heteronormative strain of 'bad sex' by pluralising it—to recall Valens—as seen in the pleasure that Lucy learns from 'eating' his body, and which leads Mariah to confess to her own 'bad sex', that is, her sexual hunger as exemplified in the memory of a 'good-tasting' apple. For with the 'pervert' Paul, himself a 'spoiled apple', Lucy learns to savour the taste of his 'rotten' body⁶³ as much as a sugar apple.

As such, Lucy goes beyond awakening Mariah to her sexual hunger. This is because Lucy exposes the 'memory of a good-tasting one'—the heteronormative understanding of sexual satiation in the form of 'good sex'—as a fantasy that colonial and neo-colonial heteronormativity perpetuates. In other words, the effect of Lucy's resistance is that she exposes the 'good sex' that these women engage in under heteronormativity as a charade and thus as sexually dissatisfying (equated to the sensation of eating a spoiled apple).

⁶⁴ In the Caribbean, the words 'rose', 'apple', 'plum', 'rose-apple', and 'plum rose' are used interchangeably, referring to fruits and flowers in general. Rosanna Masiola, *Roses and Peonies: Flower Poetics in Western and Eastern Translation* (Mantova: Universitas Studiorum, 2017), p. 48.

Kincaid presents this charade through Lucy's own sexual practice as a 'slut', which can initially be seen in how she loses interest in continuing their relationship, when Paul—the figure of the white, male coloniser—begins to determine their relationship as part of heteronormative conventions. This determination is shown in his gifting her a photograph of her cooking, which perpetuates the heteronormative representation of female sexual appetite as pornographic and exploitative:

he gave me a photograph he had taken of me standing over a boiling pot of food. In the picture I was naked from the waist up; a piece of cloth, wrapped around me, covered me from the waist down. That was the moment he got the idea he possessed me in a certain way, and that was the moment I grew tired of him. [...] He kissed me now in that possessive way, lingering over my mouth, pressing my whole body into his; and though I was not unmoved, it was not as special as he believed.

(pp. 155-56)

Kincaid's linking of cooking with the sense of sexual possession in this photograph recalls Ehrhardt's observation of the hungry woman who denies her own sexual hunger so that she may feed others first. But from how Paul kisses Lucy in 'that possessive way, lingering over my mouth, pressing my whole body into his; and though I was not unmoved, it was not as special as he believed', we see that Lucy exposes Paul's 'eating' of her body—his heteronormative enforcement of their 'good sex'—as a charade.

This charade also echoes the moment Lucy cheats on Paul with another man. In this other instance, Paul kisses Lucy with the same possessiveness despite the fact that she had just returned from a sexual liaison with another man, Roland:

I planted a kiss on Paul's mouth with an uncontrollable ardor that I actually did feel—a kiss of treachery, for I could still taste the other man in my mouth. The cold wind had left my lips the texture of stale toast, but he ate me up as if I were a freshly baked cake.

(p. 117)

From the extract above, Kincaid exposes this charade via bodily kinaesthesia, showing that even as Paul 'eats' Lucy like 'freshly baked cake' when her lips are describes as 'the texture of stale toast', he does not learn of the taste of 'the other man in my mouth'. It is through Lucy's infidelity as the 'slutty', oversexed black

woman—another instance of her modifying her sexual behaviour against her ostensible role as Paul’s loyal sexual partner—that she exposes the charade of ‘good sex’ under heteronormativity, whereby how the sexual act of bodies ‘eating’ each other looks takes precedence over its actual lived experience (as Paul’s photograph indicates). Lucy’s expression of her sexual dissatisfaction or hunger—‘it was not as special as he believed’—also exposes this ‘good sex’ as a charade. Kincaid’s kinaesthetic representation of the flesh as different kinds of food and Lucy’s voracious sexual appetite here—eating Paul and Roland—thus enables us to get a sense of the line between erotic nourishment and pornographic representation. There is thus the tension between representation and lived experience that Kincaid gestures towards, which Lucy’s motor intentionality through her slut practice detects and extracts acutely through her resistance.

Here, Lucy’s resistance might seem contentious because it is through infidelity and sexual licentiousness—same as the men who enjoy her body. But I contend that Kincaid uses Lucy’s slut practice to alert us to the complicity of the male sexual explorer in this charade, whereby they perpetuate the pornographic representation of women’s bodies that, in turn, complicates the resistance of sexually hungry women who are only trying to nourish themselves. Lucy’s licentiousness also highlights the heteronormative order that defines such licentiousness as ‘slutty’—the imbalance wherein men who are unfaithful are fine in the global heteronormative order but women who are unfaithful are seen as sluts. How, then, does Lucy create her own particular experience of erotic pleasure through the kinaesthetic understanding of flesh as food? We will see this in the next section.

ROSETTES AND PLUMS

Here we will see that Lucy’s erotic pleasure through the lived experience of flesh as food and resistance as a slut is a motor decision that is non-heteronormative. That is to say, Lucy’s sexual practice of being a slut as her mode of resistance takes reference from the sensual interaction between women. As Lucy acknowledges that she is able to openly indulge in her sexual appetite in

America and resist globalised heteronormativity, Kincaid suggests that her erotic resistance can be traced back to the West Indies, specifically to another 'slut' there. This is her mother's friend, Sylvie, a woman who had been jailed for quarrelling with a love rival over who should live with the man they were both in love with (p. 24).

We are told that their altercation left Sylvie with a mark on her cheek, described as 'human-teeth bite': 'It was as if her cheek were a half-ripe fruit and someone had bitten into it, meaning to eat it, but then realized it wasn't ripe enough.' (p. 24) Kincaid renders the altercation between the two women as their 'eating' each other's bodies, but she also suggests ambiguity in these displays of female sexual appetite:

Apparently Sylvie had said something that was unforgivable, and the other woman flew into an even deeper rage and grabbed Sylvie in an embrace, only it was not an embrace of love but an embrace of hatred, and she left Sylvie with the marked cheek.

(p. 24)

From Kincaid's description of the altercation as 'not an embrace of love but an embrace of hatred', she shows how heteronormativity engenders violence amongst women. This is particularly since Sylvie and her love rival fought not just for the love of the same man, but also for a place in the heteronormative arrangement of man and woman lawfully living together in the same house. Indeed, Sylvie's cheek mark is a corporeal reminder of the heavy consequences of overt displays of female sexual appetite under heteronormativity, seeing as their altercation ostracises both women from West Indian society: 'Both women were sent to jail for public misconduct, and going to jail was something that for the rest of their lives no one would let them forget.' (p. 24) Once again, we are reminded of Moraga's sense of the hungry lesbian woman not only as a whore but also as a crazy woman. By showing Sylvie's cheek mark as a wound that never heals—Lucy tells of how Sylvie's voice would become 'heavy and hard' as she touched her mark and thought of her youth, pinching her scarred cheek until the former thought the mark 'would fall off like a dark, purple plum in the middle of her pink palm' (p. 25)—Kincaid suggests that this legacy of woman-to-woman sexual violence under the heteronormative family order

kinaesthetically lingers in the body. After all, we are also told that Lucy's mother herself is constantly under threat of being harmed by her love rivals (p. 48).

Yet Lucy reclaims this cheek mark as the beginning of an erotic resistance against globalised heteronormativity. For Lucy renders the mark as a thing of beauty, describing it as Sylvie's 'little rosette' and explaining that this was her perception of Sylvie's scar before knowing about the latter's violent sexual history:

before I knew what it was, I was sure that the mark on her face was a rose she had put there on purpose because she loved the beauty of roses so much she wanted to wear one on her face), and it was as if the mark on her face bound her to something that she could not put into words.
(p. 25)

Lucy's description of the imagined provenance of Sylvie's mark shows her attentiveness to the sensual feeling one gets from the kinaesthetic practice of eating flesh as food as this mark, which Lucy also describes as 'a dark purple plum'⁶⁴ and which (as we recall) makes Sylvie's voice turn 'heavy and hard', is a kind of food that Lucy herself wants to 'eat' into her own body, to nourish herself as part of her sexual resistance as a 'slut' who refuses to forget the heteronormative construction of her sexual hunger as pornographic, to the point of exploiting it (as in Paul's photograph):

That is how I came to think that heavy and hard was the beginning of living, real living; and though I might not end up with a mark on my cheek, I had no doubt that I would end up with a mark somewhere.
(p. 25)

Sylvie's interaction with Lucy also occurs outside of her mother's presence (p. 25), suggesting that Lucy learns her kinaesthetic practice of sensual pleasure from women who are marginalised under heteronormativity—particularly as there is the implication that from the ambiguous interaction between Sylvie and her love rival as 'not an embrace of love but an embrace of hatred' that Lucy understands that there are other practices of erotic pleasure and sensual feeling outside of heteronormativity that need to be recognised. In this light, Lucy's 'eating' of male and female bodies in the West Indies and in America as a slut is her way of ingesting Sylvie's mark—a 'sugar apple' in

itself—into her body as part of her non-heteronormative sexual practice, one which is attentive to these instances of sexual hunger that are silenced under global heteronormativity. That is to say, in her new American locality, the ‘motor intentionality’ underlying the sensual feeling that Lucy ultimately induces through her modified sexual practice as a ‘slut’—the stereotype of the over-sexed black woman—and that enables her to reclaim it as an empowered sexual identity that is associated with sensual feeling and erotic nourishment rather than the pornographic ‘suppression of true feeling’⁶⁵ is rooted in the recognition of particular Caribbean sexual desires such as that of Sylvie’s (as embodied in her cheek bite, a kind of woman-to-woman feeding). Kincaid ultimately suggests this act of woman-to-woman feeding as sexual satiation provides marginalised women with the sustenance not only to erotically satisfy their ‘deepest cravings’, but also to resist globalised heteronormativity that construct hungry women as pornographic, to the point of engendering violence amongst women. As we have seen, the effect of this resistance is Mariah’s admission of her experience of ‘bad sex’, which in itself becomes a catalyst for disruption in the heteronormative family order in other locales.

SWEET AND SOUR PORK

From the Caribbean and America, we shift to South Korea and its heteronormative relations as expressed through erotic bodily practices and the flesh as food. Focusing on South Korea allows us to see how ‘Heteronormativity pervades across cultures but the form it takes varies from context to context’⁶⁶. The U.S. neo-colonial influence also impacts contemporary Korea, but my analysis will also include consideration of global erotic relations between the Koreas, Japan, China, and Mongolia. But in my reading of *The Vegetarian*, I would like to focus specifically on heteronormativity in a neo-colonial context in Korea. In considering Korea, we can get a sense of how resistance works in a different local sense whereby the flesh as food as sensual/pornographic is

⁶⁵ Lorde, p. 54.

⁶⁶ Jolly, p. 23.

enacted within the nation-state (and in an East Asian context) as opposed to through migration (in the Caribbean context).

Similar to *Lucy*, neo-colonial heteronormativity in Korea is kinaesthetically represented by a body mark and its associated practice of vegetarianism in Han's novel *The Vegetarian*. This can be seen in the Mongolian mark that the protagonist, a young Korean woman named Yeong-hye, bears on her buttocks. This birthmark is described as 'something ancient, something pre-evolutionary, or else perhaps a mark of photosynthesis [...] it was more vegetal than sexual' (p. 83). Han suggests this mark as a kind of food that is 'eaten' by other bodies and by Yeong-hye herself, engendering erotic resistance against globalised heteronormativity.

For we see that this Mongolian mark engenders acts of sexual transgression between Yeong-hye and her brother-in-law—an artist who remains unnamed in the novel—that upturn the strict, heteronormative structure of their families. More importantly, we will also see that this Mongolian mark kinaesthetically represents Yeong-hye's own bodily transformation into a plant, radically upturning the assumption of carnality underlying the notion of sexual appetite. I will consider the implications of the Mongolian mark in more detail later in this chapter. But Han shows their sexual transgression to be linked to another definitive moment of transgression that Yeong-hye independently engages in—her unconventional decision to change her culinary tastes and become a vegetarian in the 'carnivore's paradise'⁶⁷ that is South Korea.

Winner of the Man Booker International Prize in 2016, *The Vegetarian* tells of the consequences that arise from Yeong-hye's decision. The novel is written in three parts, with the first part narrated by Yeong-hye's husband Mr. Cheong, the second by the artist, and the third by Yeong-hye's older sister In-hye (who is also the artist's wife). Already, we get the sense that Yeong-hye's own voice and thus her sexual appetite is suppressed—she mostly stays silent throughout the novel, and we only hear her thoughts from a few inner monologues—thus her vegetarianism as a form of erotic resistance is kinaesthetically registered through her body movements. These three parts

⁶⁷ Leah, 'A Guide to Being Vegetarian in South Korea', *The Vegetarian Traveller*, 8 December 2012 <<http://www.thevegetariantraveller.com/a-guide-to-being-vegetarian-in-south-korea/>> [accessed 3 February 2017] (para. 1 of 27).

intersect at a pivotal event in the novel. This event is a family gathering organised to celebrate In-hye and her husband's purchase of a new apartment to have more space for them and their son, but which rapidly turns into a family intervention where Yeong-hye is first encouraged, then forced, to eat meat against her wishes, ending with the disastrous result of her act of self-harm (p. 29).

From this force-feeding scene, Han associates the consumption of meat with heteronormative conceptions of male and female sexual appetites. We see that Yeong-hye is physically coerced by her parents at the dinner table—the figures upholding this heteronormative household—to eat some sweet and sour pork (p. 37). These acts of force-feeding have sexual undertones as Yeong-hye sits at the dinner table bra-less, 'her light brown nipples showing through like smudges on the cotton' (p. 35)—suggesting that her attempt to satiate her own sexual appetite or 'deepest cravings' through vegetarianism is construed as 'disgraceful' (p. 26) and indecent, aimed to titillate. This sense of titillation is conveyed in an earlier scene when Yeong-hye's neglect to wear a bra at a business dinner with her husband arouses their dinner companions' attention (pp. 21-22). As we will see later in the chapter, the pornographic associations with Yeong-hye's vegetarianism can also be seen in her configuration as a Korean comfort woman whom the artist wants to capture on film.

Han shows from this force-feeding scene how Yeong-hye's own 'deepest cravings' are suppressed under heteronormative food practices, making her silenced and 'starved'. For when Yeong-hye refuses to eat the meats she is fed, her father slaps her to remind her that she should be eating meat, thus suppressing her own display of her deepest cravings (p. 38). Yeong-hye, who is mostly silent throughout this scene, is also 'unable to say even a single word in case, when she opened her mouth to speak, the meat found its way in' (pp. 39-40). Yeong-hye's emaciated body from refusing to eat meat is a corporeal indicator of her sexual hunger for other sources of nourishment that are denied her under heteronormativity, physically exemplifying Moraga's figure of the silenced hungry woman.

More disturbingly, when Yeong-hye refuses to eat the meats, the consequent force-feeding that she undergoes becomes a kind of rape. Her father's slap—'his flat palm *cleaved* the empty space' (p. 38)—violently reminds

Yeong-hye that her body itself *is* meat. We see that Yeong-hye's father orders her husband, Cheong, and her brother, Yeong-ho, to grab her arms so that she can be forced to eat the meat that he feeds her: 'If she eats it once, she'll eat it again. It's preposterous, everyone eats meat!' (p. 39) Yeong-ho holds his sister down and tells her to 'behave' and 'Just eat what he gives you' (p. 39)—a statement that disturbingly implies that the meat that Yeong-hye's father wants to feed her is his penis. In the scene, we see that Yeong-hye's father momentarily succeeds, for after thrusting the piece of pork against her lips and her 'clenched teeth' with such force that the pork is mashed to a pulp, and trying to force her mouth open with his 'strong fingers' to no avail, he slaps her once more (p. 40). With the force of the slap, Yeong-hye's mouth opens and her father manages 'to jam the pork in' to her great distress (p. 40). Through this 'rape', then, Han renders the heteronormative suppression of female sexual appetite as pornographic and exploitative in itself. That is to say, by linking the practice of force-feeding to rape, Han suggests that Korean women's bodies are determined under the heteronormative family ideology for male consumption, carrying pornographic associations.

But as we will see in the next section, Han also contextualises this 'rape' beyond the Korean nation and within neo-colonial globalisation, for the men's physical movements towards Yeong-hye carry connotations of colonial and neo-colonial militarism against her as a comfort woman. In turn, Yeong-hye's own 'deepest cravings'—as represented by her vegetarianism—are not only seen as obscene, but are suppressed.

BLACK GOAT AND MEAT SAUCE

We are told that Yeong-hye's father is an army veteran with an 'incredibly violent temperament' (p. 39) who often boasts with 'the voice of a man with strongly fixed ideas' (p. 29) about his Vietnam war exploits. Yeong-hye's nakedness also recalls another instance where she is raped by her husband after having avoided his sexual advances for a while; after the act, Cheong notes that she 'lay there in the dark staring up at the ceiling, her face blank, as though she were a "comfort woman" dragged in against her will, and I was the Japanese

soldier demanding her services' (p. 30). Tellingly, Yeong-hye had been avoiding her husband's sexual advances because his 'body smells of meat' (p. 17). Here, Han links globalised patriarchal heteronormativity to carnal sexual desire through the appetite for meat. Via bodily kinaesthesia of representing flesh as food, Han contextualises globalised heteronormativity in relation to colonial and neo-colonial militarism and the notion of the Neo-Confucian patrilineal family as the basic unit of the Korean nation⁶⁸.

In her study of the androcentric subtext underlying Korean state nationalism particularly during its period of rapid industrialisation under consecutive military regimes (1961-1987), Seungsook Moon argues that contemporary state nationalist discourse on Korean history tends to highlight numerous invasions of Korea (by the Chinese, the Mongolians in the early thirteenth century, and the Japanese in 1592-1599 as well as the 1905 annexation of Korea to Japan and its colonisation (1910)) and patriotic struggles.⁶⁹ Regarding Chinese-Korean relations and invasions, this line of history starts with Wu-ti, the Emperor of the Han Dynasty, who invaded Kochosŏn, the oldest Korean state, and established Chinese commanderies at the sites of his conquest.⁷⁰ These commanderies were later reclaimed by the kingdom of Koguryŏ (?-A.D. 668).⁷¹ In the seventh century, the kingdom of Koguryŏ also fought with the Sui and the T'ang dynasties of China.⁷² Koguryŏ's victories over the Sui and T'ang invasion armies occupy a special place in the annals of the resistance of the Korean people to foreign aggression.⁷³

Regarding Korean-Mongolian relations, the Mongol invasion of the Koryŏ Dynasty (A.D. 918-1392) in the early thirteenth century resulted in a devastating war and resulted in forty years of Mongol rule (1231-1270).⁷⁴ The Mongols arose as nomads in the steppe region of north-central Asia to the north

⁶⁸ Seungsook Moon, 'Begetting the Nation', in *Dangerous Women: Gender & Korean Nationalism*, ed. by Elaine H. Kim and Chungmoo Choi (New York and London: Routledge, 1998), pp. 33-66 (p. 54).

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 42.

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 42. See also Geoff Simons, *Korea: The Search for Sovereignty* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 1995) and Ki-baik Lee, *A New History of Korea*, trans. by Edward W. Wagner and Edward J. Shultz (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1984).

⁷¹ *Ibid.*, p. 42.

⁷² *Ibid.*, p. 42.

⁷³ Ki-baik Lee, *A New History of Korea*, trans. by Edward W. Wagner and Edward J. Shultz (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1984), p. 48.

⁷⁴ Seungsook Moon, p. 43.

of the Gobi desert.⁷⁵ As part of their vast expansionist ambitions they swept down to occupy Manchuria and north China in 1234, at the same time seeing various strategic advantages in further expansion to occupy the Korean peninsula: the occupation of Koryŏ would secure a base to facilitate the crushing of the Sung Chinese dynasty and an invasion of Japan.⁷⁶ Over a thirty-year period, the Mongols launched a total of six invasions of Koryŏ.⁷⁷

Regarding Korean-Japanese relations, the Japanese invasion of 1592-1599 was a national crisis.⁷⁸ By 1590 the whole of Japan was at peace for the first time in more than a hundred years, reunited under one sword.⁷⁹ Toyotomi Hideyoshi (1536-1598), the son of a Japanese peasant soldier, had risen to be one of the outstanding warrior rulers of the day, but his domestic triumphs stood in marked contrast to the failures of his foreign adventures.⁸⁰ He was tantalised by the thought of extending his domain to conquer China. The subjugation of the Korean peninsula was seen as the means to a greater end, as his personal ambitions went further than Korea and China.⁸¹ Hideyoshi went on to lead Japanese forces to occupy parts of the Korean peninsula, but this Japanese invasion ultimately saw the withdrawal of the Japanese with massive losses, having failed to accomplish any of their imperial objectives.⁸²

The 1905 annexation of Korea to Japan, however, turned out differently. Growing Western interest in the region throughout the late seventeenth century and a westernised Japan that also had increasing ambitions in the region meant that Korea was sandwiched between great powers and now increasingly vulnerable to world commercial pressures.⁸³ Tensions mounting between Russia and Japan over the control of Korea eventually led to the Russo-Japanese war (1904-1905), and Japan's decisive military victory served to consolidate the Japanese hold on the peninsula.⁸⁴ In the next five years, the Korean peninsula became gradually absorbed into the expanding Japanese empire, with the treaty

⁷⁵ Simons, p. 96.

⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 96. See also Ki-baik Lee.

⁷⁷ Ki-baik Lee, p. 148.

⁷⁸ Seungsook Moon, p. 43.

⁷⁹ Simons, p. 104. See also Stephen Turnbull, *The Samurai Invasion of Korea, 1592-98* (Oxford: Osprey Publishing, 2008).

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 104.

⁸¹ *Ibid.*, p. 104. See also Turnbull.

⁸² *Ibid.*, p. 105.

⁸³ *Ibid.*, p. 115.

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 120.

of annexation—to extinguish Korea as an international presence—signed on 22 August 1910.⁸⁵ The impact of the annexation was devastating for every aspect of Korean life: the currency was converted, transport and communications were totally controlled by the Japanese government, all Korean farmlands became the property of the Japanese Oriental Development Company.⁸⁶ Koreans were also regarded as racial inferiors and possessed none of the political rights enjoyed by the Japanese; and, as a subject people, were forced to endure a thorough programme of enforced ‘Japanisation’.⁸⁷ Harsh measures were undertaken to wipe out the indigenous Korean culture, with Japanese pronounced the official language in the 1930s.⁸⁸

Seungsook Moon argues that this specific representation of Korean history, familiar to the country’s general public, perpetuates pivotal androcentric themes that depict the Korean nation as being defended patriotically by men, the ‘righteous warriors’⁸⁹. Correspondingly, Seungsook Moon observes that this sense of the ‘continuous necessity to defend the Korean nation masculinizes it by linking citizenship to soldiering’⁹⁰—seen in the figures of Yeong-hye’s father and Cheong. In fact, Han’s description of Yeong-hye’s father’s behaviour also suggests him to stand in for President Park Chung-Hee, ‘the main architect of official nationalism’⁹¹ and a military man himself, who subjected the postcolonial Republic of Korea (R.O.K.) (1948) to three decades of authoritarian rule.

Yet women are marginalised through this nationalist link between citizenship and soldiering:

This also exposes the discrepancy between the seemingly egalitarian membership in a nation and its gendered nature by pointing to the reality that some Koreans are more legitimate than others; men, especially able-bodied young ones who can be warriors, are more legitimate than women.⁹²

⁸⁵ Simons, p. 125.

⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 126.

⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 126. See also Peter Duus, *The Abacus and the Sword: The Japanese Penetration of Korea, 1895-1910* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995).

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 126-27.

⁸⁹ Seungsook Moon, pp. 42-43.

⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 43.

⁹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 34.

⁹² *Ibid.*, p. 44.

This discrepancy can be further detected in the nationalist view of Korean women, particularly of their bodies, as existing only to ‘produce sons for the nation as the community of men’⁹³—to continue the Neo-Confucian patrilineage of the Korean family unit and thus of the Korean nation. This nationalist view of women’s bodies is perpetuated by the female members of Yeong-hye’s family, who have all borne children and whose comments on her refusal to eat meat emphasise her health—the underlying implication being that her vegetarianism will affect her ability to reproduce. Yeong-hye’s mother significantly attempts to feed her black goat after her attempt at self-harm, under the guise of offering her a herbal medicine implied to help with bearing children (p. 46). Yeong-hye’s vegetarianism destabilises this heteronormative order because her alternative way of sexually satiating herself threatens the function of her body as a ‘nationalist womb’. As Korean ‘woman poet’ Kim Hye-sun observes, in Korea’s patriarchal culture: ‘Any woman who violates or lives outside of these defined roles is called a *ch’angnyŏ* [prostitute].’⁹⁴ As such, Yeong-hye’s act of erotically ‘feeding’ herself through vegetarianism is considered to be indecent, even obscene. In turn, her force-feeding of meat and as meat is to keep up the representation of her body as a ‘nationalist womb’, which denies her own sexual desires, silences, and ‘starves’ her.

This sense of sexual indecency is exemplified in Han’s presentation of Yeong-hye as the contemporary figure of the Korean comfort woman. From the force-feeding scene, Han suggests that the heteronormative construction of Yeong-hye’s display of sexual hunger as indecent is linked to patriarchal shamefulness and exploitation, which would explain the effacement of the issue of the Korean comfort woman under state nationalist discourse, because the raped Korean woman is seen as embodying the shame of the Korean male warrior or soldier and thus of the whole Korean nation. In her investigation into the ‘fifty years of profound silence’⁹⁵ by the Korean government on the Military Comfort Women issue—which only emerged in the late eighties—Hyunah Yang

⁹³ Seungsook Moon, p. 41.

⁹⁴ Don Mee Choi, ‘Korean Women—Poetry, Identity, Place: A Conversation with Kim Hye-sun’, *positions: east asia cultures critique*, 11.3 (2003), 529-39 (p. 532).

⁹⁵ Hyunah Yang, ‘Remembering the Korean Military Comfort Women: Nationalism, Sexuality, and Silencing’, in *Dangerous Women: Gender & Korean Nationalism*, pp. 123-39 (p. 123).

asserts that this silence is due to the assumption underlying state nationalist discourse that:

since our Korean women had been humiliated, so too have all Koreans been victimized by the Japanese. This is because nationalism holds that 'We Koreans are one and the same body'.⁹⁶

Yeong-hye's own silence in the force-feeding scene exemplifies her double oppression by Korean and Japanese men as a woman with no voice⁹⁷. Chungmoo Choi explicates this double oppression or double colonisation of the Korean woman, by drawing on bell hooks's argument that 'women of the colonized nation are doubly oppressed by the colonizers and by men of the same race [...] colonized males adopt the stance of the colonizer as a way of recuperating their masculinity':

In that process of mimicry, colonized Korean men not only deny feminine subjectivity but oppress Korean women, to shed their emasculated and infantilized image and prove their masculinity to a degree of exaggeration that may include violence against women. Thus colonized men and the colonizers unite against the colonized women. In other words, in the sacred mission of anti-colonial nationalism, the object of which is often to restore national masculinity, women of the colonized nation are doubly oppressed.⁹⁸

In a contemporary context, Han's configuration of Yeong-hye as a contemporary comfort woman further links her to American GI prostitutes under neo-colonial globalisation, showing how Korean women continue to be marginalised and 'starved' under neo-colonial heteronormativity with Japan and the U.S. Regarding Korea's neo-colonial domination in the era of contemporary globalisation, the Korean government's silence over the comfort women issue 'occurs not only because of the "shame" associated with the raped women in patriarchal discourse, but also because of the South Korean military

⁹⁶ Yang, p. 130.

⁹⁷ Han states in an interview about Yeong-hye: 'I think she is a very determined and strong person. Very persevering. She doesn't have her own voice.' Sabine Peschel, 'Korea's Kafka? Man Booker winner Han Kang on why she turns a woman into a plant', *Deutsche Welle (DW)*, 12 September 2016 <<http://www.dw.com/en/koreas-kafka-man-booker-winner-han-kang-on-why-she-turns-a-woman-into-a-plant/a-19543017>> [accessed 7 July 2017] (para. 38 of 48).

⁹⁸ Chungmoo Choi, 'Nationalism and Construction of Gender in Korea', in *Dangerous Women: Gender & Korean Nationalism*, pp. 9-31 (p. 14).

government's efforts to "normalize" relations with Japan from the early 1960s onwards':

Japanese colonialism was erased from public discourse as the reins of rule over Korea were passed to the U.S. from Japan because the U.S. needed, in order to maintain the East Asian border of its empire, a financially strong ally in the region, which would counter-balance an arrangement between the U.S. and the U.S.S.R. that guaranteed Soviet control over the northern corner of the world.¹⁰⁰

Regarding relations between the Koreas, the Korean peninsula was divided into two regions after WWII, with separate governments, ending Japan's thirty-five-year rule over Korea in 1945. On 8 August 1945—the day the atomic bomb was dropped on Nagasaki and two days after the atomic bomb had destroyed Hiroshima—the Soviet troops entered the war against Japan and moved into north-eastern Korea, just as U.S. forces occupied the south.¹⁰¹ With Japan surrendering to Soviet forces in the north and to the American forces in the south, the two Koreas would become pawns in the 1948 Cold War between U.S.S.R. and the U.S., as separate governments were formed.¹⁰² As the division of the Korean peninsula was seen as controversial and temporary by both regimes—the boundary hastily conceived at a late-night military planning group session in Washington—armed conflicts between both sides occurred frequently along the border and escalated dramatically when North Korean forces invaded South Korea, triggering the Korean War in 1950.¹⁰³ This led to the massive participation of the U.S. and other allied forces for South Korean forces, while Chinese and Soviet troops gave military support to North Korea. After three years, the fighting ended when an armistice was signed and the Korean Demilitarized Zone (DMZ) created to separate North and South Korea.¹⁰⁴ Since no peace treaty has been signed, however, the two Koreas are technically still at war, engaged in a frozen conflict, and relations between them have seen ups and

¹⁰⁰ Elaine H. Kim and Chungmoo Choi, 'Introduction', in *Dangerous Women: Gender & Korean Nationalism*, pp. 1-8 (pp. 3-4).

¹⁰¹ Simons, p. 156.

¹⁰² *Ibid.*, p. 157.

¹⁰³ Adrian Buzo, *The Making of Modern Korea*, 3rd edition (Oxford: Routledge, 2017), p. 107.

¹⁰⁴ Charles K. Armstrong, *The Koreas*, 2nd edition (New York: Routledge, 2014), p. 10.

downs throughout different leaders.¹⁰⁵ In April 2018, historic change was made between the South and North Korean leaders as they met at the demilitarized zone and agreed to sign a treaty by the end of the year to formally end the Korean War—though the long-term outcome of this remains to be seen.¹⁰⁶ But to consider specifically South Korea's development post-WWII (as *The Vegetarian* is mainly set in this context), Elaine H. Kim and Chungmoo Choi observe that ultimately because of the direct installation of the U.S. military apparatus at the end of World War II, South Korea, like many other former colonies, never had an opportunity to decolonise in the true sense of the world.¹⁰⁷ U.S.-sponsored military dictatorships combined with traditional Korean neo-Confucian patriarchy to construct modern South Korea as an androcentric nation.¹⁰⁸ In fact, it was Park who was for Korea's participation in the Vietnam War, arguing that 'South Korea owed it to the U.S. to assist in the fight against communism in Vietnam to repay Americans for coming to South Korea's aid in the 1950-53 Korean War'.¹⁰⁹ Tae Yang Kwak observes that 'Park Chung-hee recognized that Korean participation in American military activities in Southeast Asia was the key to reversing the course of Korean weakness and setting the nation on a path of strength and assertiveness'¹¹⁰—a statement that links Korean state nationalism to contemporary global forces. That is to say, in the contemporary era, Korean heteronormativity is now aligned with global forces (of heteronormativity from the U.S.) and colludes in a globally homogeneous experience. Han suggests through Yeong-hye's flesh as food (meat) and her force-feeding/rape as a comfort woman that she continues to be silenced and 'starved' under this globalised, neo-colonial heteronormativity as imposed through Korean state nationalism in the contemporary era.

¹⁰⁵ Armstrong notes that on the one hand, the two Koreas remain locked in mutual antagonism and an armed truce, prepared at all times for war with each other. On the other hand, there have been periodic movements since the early 1970s toward reconciliation between the two Korean states, and after the South Korean administration of Kim Dae Jung came to power in 1998, South Korea made engagement with the North a priority, with decidedly mixed results. Armstrong, p. 12.

¹⁰⁶ 'Koreas make nuclear pledge after historic summit', *BBC*, 27 April 2018 <<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-asia-43921385>> [accessed 27 June 2018].

¹⁰⁷ Kim and Choi, p. 3.

¹⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 3.

¹⁰⁹ Steven Borowiec, 'Allegations of S. Korean atrocities arising 40 years after Vietnam War', *Los Angeles Times*, 16 May 2015 <<http://www.latimes.com/world/asia/la-fg-korea-vietnam-20150516-story.html>> [accessed 29 June 2017] (para. 16 of 20).

¹¹⁰ *Ibid.* (para. 18).

Neo-Confucian, heteronormative constructions of the indecent ‘comfort woman’ are different under neo-colonial globalised Korea. Katherine H. S. Moon notes that Korean prostitutes in American military base camptowns became instituted as an economic and social system by U.S. and Korean government authorities—by Park himself for the purpose of economic and military gains, and on the part of the U.S. military to assume that prostitution was a necessary evil and Korean women mere commodities, whose bodies and human dignity were disposable.¹¹¹ In the sixties and seventies, women formed the backbone of the low-skilled, low-wage, light-manufacturing export industry that launched South Korea’s economic ‘miracle’, and on the security front, thousands of poor girls and women from the countryside put their bodies to work selling sex to U.S. soldiers, increasing Korea’s foreign exchange earnings and contributing to security by ‘providing comfort’ to them, such that these women became ‘lauded’ by the R.O.K. as ‘patriots’.¹¹² Their proximity to U.S servicemen, then, made these women into convenient, though unconventional resources for pursuing R.O.K’s security goals.¹¹³

Despite their ‘patriotism’, however, most Koreans despised these women and these prostitutes are condemned by Korean society.¹¹⁴ Today, activist groups for former ‘comfort women’ who were sex slaves to the Japanese Imperial Army have consciously tried to keep the plight and cause of U.S. camptown prostitutes out of their movement—these former ‘comfort women’ do not want to be associated with such ‘morally decadent’, ‘trashy’ women who ‘voluntarily’ entered prostitution.¹¹⁵ The sexual and militaristic silencing of Yeong-hye of her ‘deepest cravings’ by her male family members as they force her to ‘eat’ their flesh and to enjoy this experience, then, also exemplifies this economic exploitation of female sexual appetite—one that mobilises sexual labour to uphold the heteronormative order of the Korean nation in neo-colonial globalisation, while also treating this sexual labour that is construed as a form of ‘patriotic’ sacrifice as disgraceful.

¹¹¹ Katherine H. S. Moon, ‘Prostitute Bodies and Gendered States’, in *Dangerous Women: Gender & Korean Nationalism*, pp. 141-74 (p. 167).

¹¹² *Ibid.*, p. 158.

¹¹³ *Ibid.*, p. 159.

¹¹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 164.

¹¹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 167.

In the force-feeding scene, the movements of the artist's body in relation to Yeong-hye's show Han's kinaesthetic representation of this economic yet disgraceful conception of female sexual appetite under neo-colonial heteronormativity. The artist—a military graduate of the Korean Special Forces Brigades—is an 'idle spectator' throughout Yeong-hye's 'rape', up to the moment that she cuts her wrists and faints, at which point he is galvanised into action: 'Every inch the special forces graduate, he stopped the bleeding with practised skill, and picked [Yeong-hye] up in his arms' (p. 41). The artist's body movements—first his idle spectatorship, then his economic mending of Yeong-hye's cut flesh—exemplify his desire to suppress any corporeal evidence of her 'rape' and her disgraceful sexual sacrifice which exposes Korean male shame. This sense of sexual shame parallels the artist's awareness of his own waning manhood throughout the novel, from his 'receding hairline' to his 'paunch' (p. 57). In a militaristic sense, the artist's body movements in dealing with Yeong-hye's naked, hungry body also recall those of the two brigades of Korean Special Forces who, with the support of the U.S. government, were sent by the authoritarian government to crush a student-led movement for democracy in 1980—an event now known as the Gwangju uprising or the Gwangju massacre.¹¹⁶ Han suggests that the crushing of democracy in neo-colonial globalised Korea is reminiscent of the heteronormative suppression of sexual freedom and overt displays of female sexual appetite which the 'morally decadent' and 'trashy' camptown prostitutes exemplified. We thus see the silencing and 'starving' of the Korean woman and her sexual freedom as enacted through Korean-U.S. neo-colonial relations.

This can be seen in the artist's complicated feelings about creating new video art after a fallow period that is inspired by Yeong-hye's vegetarianism and particularly, her Mongolian mark. Yeong-hye's act of cutting her flesh and spilling her blood or 'meat sauce'¹¹⁷ at the end of the force-feeding episode

¹¹⁶ Tim Shorrock, 'The Gwangju Uprising and American Hypocrisy: One Reporter's Quest for Truth and Justice in Korea', *The Nation*, 5 June 2015
<https://www.thenation.com/article/kwangju-uprising-and-american-hypocrisy-one-reporters-quest-truth-and-justice-korea/> [accessed 1 July 2017] (para. 2 of 52).

¹¹⁷ Lee Jae-Eui's first-person account of the Gwangju massacre draws links between carnal appetite and military violence: 'A cluster of troops attacked each student individually. They would crack his head, stomp his back, and kick him in the face. When the soldiers were done, he looked like a pile of clothes in *meat sauce* (italics mine).' Lee Jae-Eui, *Kwangju Diary: Beyond*

draws him into this fallow period, because he can no longer bear the violence that he saw in contemporary Korea and therefore within himself:

he'd heard a sound like something snapping inside his own body. The feeling he'd had at that moment was one that, even now, he found himself unable to explain with any degree of accuracy. A person had attacked their own body right in front of his eyes, tried to hack at it like it was a piece of meat; their blood had soaked his white shirt, mingling with his sweat and gradually drying to a dark brown stain.

(p. 66)

The artist had been making video art in the aftermath of the Gwangju massacre that dealt with serious social issues and had an ascetic style that earned him the nickname of 'the May priest', as if he 'were atoning for surviving the May massacre' (p. 109)—his ascetic celibacy echoing that of Yeong-hye's own vegetarianism. That Yeong-hye's act of hacking at her own 'meat' causes the artist to question his sexual freedom and engagement with his art in a contemporary era of heteronormative oppression, even making him temporarily impotent in his artmaking, recalls Lorde's kinaesthetic differentiation between sensation and feeling.¹¹⁸

Following on from this, the artist's distaste at his ideas for his new video art that energises him after his fallow period—'he'd felt energy start to wriggle up from the pit of his stomach' (p. 59), recalling Ensler's own energised creativity—still reflects this heteronormative construction of the satiation of female sexual appetite as pornographic. This is because the artist becomes obsessed with Yeong-hye's 'vegetal' Mongolian mark, which he wants to 'eat' as he licks the mark on her buttocks after their sexual intercourse—'*I want to swallow you, have you melt into me and flow through my veins*' (p. 115)—and

Death, Beyond the Darkness of the Age, trans. by Kap Su Seol and Nick Mamamtas (Los Angeles, CA: UCLA Asian Pacific Monograph Series, 1999), p. 46.

¹¹⁸ *The Vegetarian* was written while Korea was under the presidency of Park Guen-hye, the daughter of Park Chung-hee; at the time of writing this chapter, however, Park Guen-hye has been impeached. In an interview, Han mentioned her unease with how she felt Korean society seemed to be moving back to the past under Park Guen-hye's government: 'Actually since Park has become the president, a lot of people are undergoing pain. [...] The current situation in Korea, having a new government led by Park Guen-hye, certainly allowed me to revisit the Gwangju massacre. [...] I thought Korean society is going backwards now, and I needed to revisit the Gwangju issue that Korea never really resolved.' Mark Reynolds, 'Han Kang: To be human', *Bookanista* <<http://bookanista.com/han-kang/>> [accessed 2 July 2017] (para. 28 of 49).

this desire culminates in an image that he finds ‘monstrous’, because of its ‘carnality [and] pure sensuality’ after his ascetic celibacy:

he was struck by the image of a blue flower on a woman’s buttocks, its petals opening outwards. In his mind, the fact that his sister-in-law still had a Mongolian mark on her buttocks became inexplicably bound up with the image of men and women having sex, their naked bodies completely covered with painted flowers.

(p. 59)

Even as the artist is eventually able to make this video art with Yeong-hye, capturing her in the throes of their sexual intercourse and erotically satiating herself, the artist struggles with its pornographic associations:

never before had he imagined himself being branded as some peddler of cheap titillation. He’d always been completely unrestricted when it came to making his art, and so it hadn’t ever really occurred to him that this freedom might become a luxury.

(p. 61)

At one point, Yeong-hye’s sexual motions on film are described as ‘obscene’, even though we see from her giggling at her wetness and learn from her own words that this is the first time that she experience a sense of erotic pleasure: ‘I really wanted to do it [...] I’ve never wanted it so much before. It was the flowers on his body. I couldn’t help myself.’ (pp. 103-07) Through the artist, then, we see the heteronormative construction of female sexual satiation as pornographic.

Yet Han renders the artist with sympathy, as underlying his own sexual arousal by Yeong-hye’s body is his remorse at the violence it is associated with and a desire for atonement. This is reflected in his disgust at his fantasies about having sex with his sister-in-law, which he realises to be a kind of rape as he imagines making her ‘eat’ his body:

And so who was the faceless man with the arms around her neck, looking as if he was attempting to throttle her, who was thrusting himself into her? He knew that it was himself; that, in fact, it could be none other. Arriving at this conclusion, he grimaced.

(p. 60)

This can also be seen in how Yeong-hye’s act of hacking at her body or her ‘meat’ makes the artist want to inflict harm on his own body, to rid it of its carnal

appetite: ‘He wanted to pummel his cheeks until the blood showed through beneath his black beard, and smash his ugly lips, swollen with desire, with the sole of his shoe.’ (p. 62) Furthermore, looking beyond its titillation factor, the artist sees these bodies in sexual intercourse moving into each other and ‘eating’ and ‘feeding’ each other in the video art he imagines as peaceful and nourishing—‘there was something straightforward about the ways in which they were having sex [...] there would have been no more suggestiveness about them than there was with spring flowers’ (p. 58). As such, it is Yeong-hye’s hacking at her own body and meat with a fruit knife that jolts the artist to this suppression of female sexual appetites and desires. While this might be read as sexual sacrifice, I contend in the following section that this can also be read as a form of erotic protest against heteronormativity in neo-colonial globalisation that has disruptive effects on those around Yeong-hye.

A BLAZING FLOWER

To understand Yeong-hye’s erotic protest, firstly, her nakedness in the force-feeding scene, while treading the line between the pornographic and the erotic, is enacted out of her own discomfort with her affiliations to carnal sexuality. Yeong-hye’s desire to divest her body of its sexual carnality can be detected in one of her inner monologues—the few instances in the novel where we gain direct access to her perspective—where she thinks about a lump that she feels in her chest and that causes her pain:

The thing that hurts is my chest. Something is stuck in my solar plexus. I don’t know what it might be. It’s lodged there permanently these days. Even though I’ve stopped wearing a bra, I can feel this lump all the time. No matter how deeply I inhale, it doesn’t go away.

Yells and howls, threaded together layer upon layer, are enmeshed to form that lump. Because of meat. I ate too much meat. The lives of the animals I ate have all lodged in there. Blood and flesh, all those butchered bodies are scattered in every nook and cranny, and though the physical remnants were excreted, their lives still stick stubbornly to my insides.

One time, just one more time, I want to shout. I want to throw myself through the pitch-black window. Maybe that would finally get this lump out of my body. Yes, perhaps that might work.

(p. 49)

We see that the lump in Yeong-hye's chest is made up of all the animal meat she has consumed, and that to ease this pain, she forgoes wearing a bra—becoming naked. Yeong-hye's nakedness is thus not to parade her sexual attractiveness for titillation, but rather, a practice that expresses her extreme discomfort and pain with the degree to which the flesh of other animal bodies has penetrated and is embedded within her own body, therefore signifying her act of expressing her particular, lived experience of the patriarchal, heteronormative, violent determination of her flesh as meat and enacting her own sensual 'feeling' of her experience of the world that resists such determination of her body. As before, Han draws links between excessive animal meat consumption and carnal sexual desire.

Secondly, regarding Yeong-hye's act of self-harm with a fruit knife as a form of erotic protest, we can consider another inner monologue when she recalls mincing frozen meat in front of Cheong the day before she turned vegetarian (p. 19). From Cheong's perspective, Yeong-hye is 'a more than competent cook' and he admits having 'always been impressed by her way with food'—particularly with cooking meat (p. 14). But Yeong-hye reveals her secret agitation when dealing with raw animal meat and in this instance, her agitation causes her to cut herself (p. 19). Han renders this inner monologue through bodily kinaesthesia:

If you knew how hard I've always worked to keep my nerves in check. Other people just get a bit flustered, but for me everything gets confused, speeds up. Quick, quicker. The hand holding the knife was working so quickly, I felt heat prickle the back of my neck. My hand, the chopping board, the meat, and then the knife, slicing cold into my finger.

(p. 19)

Following this incident, Yeong-hye sucks on her cut finger and finds that the taste of her blood calms her down:

A drop of red blood already *blossoming* out of the cut (italics mine). Rounder than round. Sticking the finger in my mouth calmed me. The scarlet colour, and now the taste, sweetness masking something else, left me strangely pacified.

(p. 19)

Yeong-hye's blood 'blossoming' out of her cut finger, which she sucks or 'eats', kinaesthetically re-associates her flesh or 'meat' with flowers and plants instead.

This cut also precedes the moment when Yeong-hye cut herself with a fruit knife in the force-feeding scene; there, her blood is described as flowing out like a ribbon from her wrists (p. 41), suggesting an alternative nakedness and eroticism as she exposes this bodily substance to her family. The ‘sweetness’ of Yeong-hye’s blood is also reminiscent of the sweetness of red bean, referencing her blood that stains the artist’s shirt ‘drying into the dark, matt burgundy of red bean soup’ (p. 72). That the sweetness of Yeong-hye’s blood is able to mask ‘something else’—implied to be the taste of meat—thus suggests a burgeoning sexual satiation and pleasure that enables her to divest and decolonise her body of its carnal desire, and to feed her own sexual hunger and ‘eat’ herself in an alternative way that recognises sensual feeling. Yeong-hye’s practice of cutting and ‘eating’ her flesh with erotic pleasure shows her resistance whereby she modifies her behaviour with ‘motor intentionality’—this enables her to access the erotic as a source of power and agency.

Yeong-hye’s erotic satiation does not stop here. Han suggests that Yeong-hye’s erotic protest has the ultimate aim of transforming her human body into a plant, as seen in her physical transformation after she cuts out meat. The two men who see her naked—her husband and the artist—describe her changed body in vegetal and asexual terms, signifying her divestment of carnal desire. Cheong describes Yeong-hye’s nipples as ‘a pair of acorns’ (p. 25) and how her bare shoulders are ‘covered in goose pimples like tiny sesame seeds’ (p. 32). The artist observes: ‘Rather than provoking lust, it was a body that made one want to rest one’s gaze quietly upon it.’ (p. 74)

Yeong-hye is later found deep in the woods ‘standing stock-still and soaked with rain as if she herself was one of the glistening trees’ (p. 125). She also performs a handstand, a body posture she learns from the trees:

I thought trees stood up straight ... I only found out just now. They actually stand with both arms in the earth, all of them. [...] All of them, they’re all standing on their heads. [...] Do you know how I found out? Well, I was in a dream, and I was standing on my head...leaves were growing from my body, and roots were sprouting from my hands...so I dug down into the earth. On and on...I wanted flowers to bloom from my crotch so I spread my legs; I spread them wide...

(p. 148)

We see Yeong-hye kinaesthetically ‘feeding’ and nourishing herself in another way so as to have ‘flowers to bloom from her crotch’. In fact, this body stance evolves from the one she takes after her sexual intercourse with the artist, with her naked body covered with painted flowers:

She thrusts her glittering golden breasts over the veranda railing, her legs covered with scattered orange peels, and she spread them wide as though she wanted to make love to the sunlight, to the wind.

(p. 118)

With Yeong-hye’s body having transformed into ‘the blazing flower [...] that body which now glittered with images so much more intense than those [the artist] had filmed during the night’ (p. 119), Han suggests that Yeong-hye is feeding herself erotically to the point of producing her own food through the leaf that is her Mongolian mark. Yeong-hye eventually rejects all food and only wants water and sunlight, saying: ‘I don’t need to eat, not now. I can live without it. All I need is sunlight’ (p. 154). Yeong-hye’s turn to photosynthesis for sustenance suggests that she erotically divests her body and its carnal desires by reconfiguring the very chemistry of her body. This is not to say that by eschewing meat, Yeong-hye eschews her body. Rather, recalling her Mongolian mark as ‘more vegetal than sexual’, her body has now become a vegetable—the bodily practices through which Yeong-hye engages with the world and which shapes her lived experience are now entirely modified from when her body was just constructed as meat. Yeong-hye’s ‘transformation’ into a plant thus exemplifies a non-heteronormative form of erotic resistance that is sensual yet does not depend on the carnal ‘eating’ of other bodies, enacting an alternative practice of sexual satiation that is nourishing without being exploitative.

As seen earlier, Han links carnal appetite to colonial and neo-colonial militarism. But a particular source of inspiration for *The Vegetarian* that Han has cited in interviews can illuminate Yeong-hye’s erotic resistance by turning herself into a plant. This is a line from the Korean modernist poet Yi Sang, ‘I want to believe human beings should be plants’, that was written in the Korean script *hangul* banned under Japanese rule.¹¹⁹ As Han connects this vegetal bodily

¹¹⁹ Sarah Shin, ‘Interview with Han Kang’, trans. by Deborah Smith, *The White Review*, March 2016 <<http://www.thewhitereview.org/interviews/interview-with-han-kang/>> [accessed 24 February 2017] (para. 2 of 51). See also Peschel.

transformation to East Asian geopolitics, we can consider what the genealogy of the Mongolian mark—as the ‘leaf’ to her plant body—illuminates to us about Yeong-hye’s sexual resistance practice.

Biologically speaking, Mongolian marks are a type of birthmark caused by the pigment in the skin.¹²⁰ They are often present at birth, and some infants are more likely to get them than others, particularly those of Asian, Hispanic, Native American, African, and East Indian descent.¹²¹ This underlies the genealogy of the term ‘Mongolian spot’: it was coined in 1883 by German anthropologist Erwin Bälz (1849-1913) who was working in Japan and believed that these birthmarks were characteristic of the babies under his care.¹²² In deciding to call these marks ‘Mongolian spots’, Bälz referred to a now outdated take on race which classified Asians as ‘Mongoloids’ popularised by Johann Friedrich Blumenbach, the founding father of craniometry.¹²³ The phrase ‘Mongolian spot’, then, elides ‘Mongolian’ with ‘Mongoloid’ when describing biological features in the medical field. In this sense, I believe that Han’s use of the phrase does not deliberately refer to modern Korean-Mongolian geopolitical relations.¹²⁴

¹²⁰ Jennifer Berry, ‘Mongolian spots: Causes, pictures, and outlook’, *Medical News Today*, 10 August 2017 <<https://www.medicalnewstoday.com/articles/318853.php>> [accessed 14 June 2018] (para. 1 of 34).

¹²¹ *Ibid.* (para. 2).

¹²² Robert B. Taylor, *The Amazing Language of Medicine: Understanding Medical Terms and Their Backstories* (Switzerland: Springer International Publishing, 2017), p. 94. See also Ichiro Kikuchi, ‘What Is a Mongolian Spot?’, *International Journal of Dermatology*, 21.3 (1982), 131-33.

¹²³ Heather Johnson Yu, ‘Why Some Asians Have a Vanishing Blue Birthmark Called A “Mongolian Spot”’, *NextShark*, August 2017 <<https://nextshark.com/what-exactly-is-a-mongolian-spot-anyway/>> [accessed 16 June 2018] (para. 22 of 32). See also Roshan Bista and Prativa Pandey, ‘Mongolian Spot’, *Radiography Open*, 1.1 (2014), 12-18.

¹²⁴ Modern Korean-Mongolian geopolitical relations point towards cultural similarities between the two countries due to their history. Mongolia has had good relations with North Korea when it became the second country to recognise its sovereignty, after only the Soviet Union, and offered North Korea material support during the Korean War. After the fall of the USSR, Mongolia transitioned into a market economy and swung strategically towards South Korea. James Brooke calls Mongolia and South Korea ‘fraternal twins’. While these geopolitical relations seem helpful in offering the cultural context behind Han’s use of the Mongolian mark—and the translated text also gives this impression—I have compared the original and translated versions with the help of a native Korean speaker and have found that Han does not make any sociopolitical link to Mongolia. The comparison process involved us doing line-by-line translations of relevant sections of the novel mentioning the Mongolian mark and determining the accuracy of the translation within the context of the original text. So the mythological link of the Mongolian mark that I go on to explain seems more plausible. Ankit Panda, ‘What Do North Korea And Mongolia Have In Common?’, *The Diplomat*, 30 October 2013 <<https://thediplomat.com/2013/10/what-do-north-korea-and-mongolia-have-in-common/>> [accessed 26 June 2018]. James Brooke, ‘Mongolians and Koreans: Twins With Minimal Sibling

Instead I suggest that, for Han, the significance of the Mongolian mark lies more with its meaning in Korean mythology. In Korean mythology, it is believed that the birthmark is a bruise formed when *Samshin Halmoni*—a deity to whom many families pray to for their unborn child’s good health—slaps children to life when they are born, leaving behind the indelible blue spot.¹²⁵ While the slap recalls Yeong-hye’s father striking her as meat as a contemporary comfort woman, Han’s description of the Mongolian mark as ‘ancient’ and ‘pre-evolutionary’ also references this sense of mythic Korean identity as lived and experienced through the body. I have looked at various blog posts written by Koreans in relation to having Mongolian birthmarks themselves. These writers describe such an experience as having ‘Mongolian blood’, but this description is not so much about one’s specific ethnicity; rather, the Mongolian mark signifies a sense of national belonging and of being Korean that is sensually felt.¹²⁶ Recalling Seungsook Moon’s earlier assertion that women are seen as ‘nationalist wombs’—a view that the postcolonial Korean government cements through its revival of the founding Tan’gun myth to connect its rule to the historical unity and cultural uniqueness of the Korean people, and which also renders Korean men as ‘righteous warriors’—Yeong-hye’s transformation into a plant is her act of decolonisation and local erotic resistance against colonial and neo-colonial heteronormativity within contemporary globalised Korea.¹²⁷ This is because Yeong-hye’s vegetal transformation is her way of sensually asserting her own cultural belonging within this myth, while also changing the underlying associations of this myth as it is linked to violent carnal desire.

This is not to say that Han suggests plants or vegetarianism as the determining mode of erotic resistance against carnal desire. From how the artist’s sexual attraction to Yeong-hye is heightened after finding out about her Mongolian mark, the mark still provokes carnal sexual desire, just in another

Rivalry’, *The New York Times*, 12 October 2003
 <<https://www.nytimes.com/2003/10/12/world/mongolians-and-koreans-twins-with-minimal-sibling-rivalry.html>> [accessed 26 June 2018].

¹²⁵ Jennifer Hope Choi, ‘My Mongolian Spot’, *The American Scholar*, 5 June 2017
 <https://theamericanscholar.org/my-mongolian-spot/#.Wx_gNKknbdQ> [accessed 14 June 2018] (para. 12 of 61).

¹²⁶ See Jennifer Choi; Yu; T.K., ‘Mongolian Spank Marks’, *Ask a Korean*, 23 February 2009
 <<http://askakorean.blogspot.com/2009/02/dear-korean-friend-mentioned-that-many.html>> [accessed 27 June 2018].

¹²⁷ Seungsook Moon, p. 40. See also Thomas Kern, ‘Cultural Performance and Political Regime Change’, *Sociological Theory*, 27.3 (2009), 291-316 (p. 301).

form. The artist's desire to 'eat' the vegetal Mongolian mark and his motions of licking and swallowing Yeong-hye's body blurs the line between erotic satiation and sexual exploitation (recalling Ensler's own discomfort) because underlying his desire is the implication of artistic exploitation—reminiscent of Paul's photograph of Lucy cooking. The artist both wants to sleep with her and to make art from their sexual intercourse, where their bodies would 'look like overlapping petals' (p. 113).

But as the artist clandestinely 'eats' Yeong-hye's body, Han shows that it is Yeong-hye who has sexual agency. For one, the artist is sexually insecure when confronted with her nakedness—he tries conceal his erection during an accidental glimpse of her naked body (p. 74) and tries to cover up and suck in his paunch in front of her after their sex (p. 113). Yeong-hye's calmness in the face of the artist's insecurity turns the tables of the heteronormative order on him, as she comes across as 'a perfectly ordinary woman': 'It's true, he thought, she really is ordinary. It's me who's the crazy one.' (p. 91) For another, as mentioned earlier, through making the video art, Yeong-hye discovers a kind of sexual pleasure she never experienced before. Like Lucy, Yeong-hye allows the artist to 'eat' her, but on her terms—thus kinaesthetically enacting sexual agency that resists heteronormative conceptions of such erotic 'eatings' and 'feedings' as indecent and pornographic.

On a wider scale, Yeong-hye's erotic resistance has more disruptive effects, for by allowing the artist to 'eat' her, the heteronormative order of his family is dismantled. It is In-hye who discovers their sexual transgression and is incited into action—she, who was also an 'idle spectator' during Yeong-hye's force-feeding, is no longer so. In-hye's contacting of emergency services ultimately leads to the artist's ostracisation from society and loss of access to their son (p. 160). Yeong-hye's erotic resistance as a contemporary comfort woman therefore disrupts the Neo-Confucian patrilineage of Korean state nationalism and forces the artist to suffer the consequences of his carnal sexual appetite—the price he pays being his (sexual) freedom.

In-hye's actions further suggests that Yeong-hye's erotic resistance does not stop at the artist. Yeong-hye awakens her older sister to the latter's sexual hunger and marginality. In-hye notes:

[In-hye had] been unable to forgive [Yeong-hye] for soaring alone over a boundary she herself could never bring herself to cross, unable to forgive that magnificent irresponsibility that had enabled Yeong-hye to shuck off social constraints and leave her behind, still a prisoner. And before Yeong-hye had broken those bars, she'd never even known they were there.

(p. 143)

Even as In-hye's response to Yeong-hye and husband's sexual transgression further marginalises Yeong-hye, who is admitted into a psychiatric facility, In-hye also suffers the consequences. Their parents sever contact with In-hye because she 'reminded them of the despicable way they'd treated Yeong-hye' (p. 139).

A later feeding scene between the two sisters further illuminates In-hye's sexual awakening. Here, In-hye attempts to feed Yeong-hye as she lies on a bed in the psychiatric ward, refusing food. Trying to keep her sister alive by proving that she can eat like a 'normal' person, In-hye (who is also a maternal figure to Yeong-hye) tries to feed Yeong-hye her favourite fruits from childhood—peaches, watermelon, Chinese quince tea, and plums (p. 155)—to lead her back towards a heteronormative order that determines the very conceptions of 'hunger' and 'appetite'. Han renders the kinaesthesia of the sisters' bodies as they move in close proximity to each other—In-hye cuts up the peach and brings it to Yeong-hye's nose, she rubs a piece of cut watermelon against her sister's lips, she sips the quince tea before pouring it into a hand towel which she uses to moisten Yeong-hye's lips, she runs her sister's fingers over the smooth skin of plums, curls her fingers around one and makes her hold it (p. 155-66). But Yeong-hye remains seemingly unresponsive to the fragrances and tastes of the foodstuffs—'[In-hye] tries to use two of her fingers to part Yeong-hye's lips, but her mouth is shut tight' (p. 155)—recalling her resistance practice of protest. Instead, it is In-hye who erotically responds to the fruits, recalling moments in her life when she could have transgressed heteronormative boundaries and which could have placed her in Yeong-hye position, 'incarcerated' (p. 178) in a psychiatric facility.

These moments include In-hye's suicide attempt that resulted from her own 'rape' by her husband: he forces her to 'put up with it' after she has refused his sexual advances, as another 'comfort woman', after which she would 'find

herself wanting to stab herself in the eyes with her chopsticks, or pour the boiling water from the kettle over her head' (p. 164). This urge towards self-harm mirrors Yeong-hye's act of hacking her own body or meat. But this also awakens In-hye to the fact that her marriage is a form of self-harm, which Yeong-hye's slitting of her wrist with a fruit knife and the vaginal blood wound that In-hye sustains as evidence of her 'rape' erotically exposes:

For the first time, [In-hye] became vividly aware of how much of her life she had spent with her husband. It had been a period of time utterly devoid of happiness and spontaneity. [...] All of it self-inflicted.

(p. 161)

Like Yeong-hye's sucking on the sweetness of the blood from her cut finger, In-hye's vaginal blood wound sucks at her body like 'her whole body was being pulled into its pitch-black maw' (p. 163), 'eating' her. But In-hye's act of 'eating' herself and awakening to the self-harmful marriage that she originally thought was nourishing—when she first met her husband who was 'skinny as a sorghum stalk', she wanted 'to use her own strength to allow him to rest' (p. 131)—she discovers her sexual hunger under global heteronormativity. In-hye ultimately reflects: 'It's your body, you can treat it however you please. The only area where you're free to do just as you like. And even that doesn't turn out how you wanted.' (p. 177) This reflection occurs as In-hye vomits out the food contents of her body after seeing Yeong-hye being force-fed at the psychiatric facility (p. 176). In this act of vomiting, then, Han signals the beginning of In-hye's kinaesthetic enactment of sexual agency and empowerment. Han also suggests that In-hye has begun to prepare her body for alternative forms of nourishment that gesture towards alternative practices of erotic resistance, especially for marginalised women who have no voice. The fact that Yeong-hye's silent protest incites her sister's own resistance once again shows the power of protest, as Han herself has asserted of the two sisters:

Some people say [Yeong-hye] is very passive or too weak. But I don't think so. I think she is a very determined and strong person. Very persevering. [...] in the last scene, Ying-Hye, the elder sister, looks out of the window of the ambulance. And her gaze is protesting something, waiting for an answer. I think this novel is just like that: protesting and waiting for an answer.¹³⁰

¹³⁰ Peschel (para. 46).

CONCLUSION

In this chapter, we have seen that the acts of ‘eating’ flesh and refusing to ‘eat’ others’ bodies presented in *Lucy* and *The Vegetarian* signify practices of erotic resistance that account for particular, lived experiences of globalisation at different local cultural sites. I have argued that Kincaid’s and Han’s representations of the flesh as food are attentive to bodily kinaesthesia—how sentient bodies move and engage with the world through a form of ‘corporeal consciousness’ that informs their lived experiences of globalisation. I have also shown that by rendering these practices in which marginalised female bodies ‘eat’ other bodies as a form of erotic nourishment, the female protagonists resist the global homogenising force of heteronormativity under neo-colonialism. Kincaid and Han suggest that heteronormativity silences certain women and their sexual desires on a global scale, and that such silencing is often experienced as starvation.

Both novels show how these erotic resistance practices are enacted at the respective sites of the U.S. and South Korea. These practices occur within the heteronormative family and they are acts of modifying bodily behaviour. In *Lucy*, Kincaid presents West Indian *au pair* Lucy as a sexual traveller who, having been ‘starved’ of her sexual desires in the Caribbean, satisfies her sexual appetite in her new American home while being aware of how her actions can be seen as those of a ‘slut’. But through Lucy’s embodied interactions with her lovers and her employers—we see her modifying her sexual behaviour in certain ways, from her ‘virginal’ manners to her ‘devouring’ of Paul—Kincaid shows that Lucy resists these assumptions that are placed on herself. The cheek rosette that Lucy reclaims from Sylvia exemplifies the former’s bodily modification practice and resistance. I have addressed the effectiveness of Lucy’s resistance, since it treads the line between the erotic and the pornographic. But I have also shown that Lucy’s practice of erotic nourishment—which ultimately exposes heteronormativity as a charade and dismantles the household she is in—is a particular response that resists the universalised experience of global neo-colonial heteronormativity within her locality of North America.

For Yeong-hye who turns vegetarian in the carnivorous paradise that is South Korea, and who mostly stays silent throughout *The Vegetarian*, Han

suggests that vegetarianism is a form of erotic protest against global heteronormativity. Yeong-hye's Mongolian mark signifies the bodily behavioural modification that underlies her resistance practice of erotic protest. Under heteronormativity, Yeong-hye's body or 'meat' is associated with carnal desire, construing her as a modern day Korean comfort woman who is 'starved' of her own sexual desires. I have examined how Yeong-hye's vegetarianism, which radically transforms her body into a plant, changes the very chemistry of her body, such that she is able to produce her own 'food' from her own flesh and independently nourish her own sexual appetite—signifying sexual agency. While this practice can also be construed as a form of sexual sacrifice—thus negating her agency—I have also addressed the effectiveness of Yeong-hye's resistance in relation to Han's own understanding of protest as a powerful form of resistance on its own terms. That Han renders Yeong-hye's seemingly passive protest as a determined act of refusing what she is forcibly fed under neo-colonial heteronormativity shows this agency. Yeong-hye's vegetarianism is also a particular response that resists the universalised experience of global neo-colonial heteronormativity within her locality of South Korea, amidst colonial and neo-colonial relations with the U.S. and Japan.

These two practices of resistance as shown in the novels exemplify how women who are marginalised under globalised heteronormativity enact motor decisions through their bodies that have motor intentionality. Kincaid's and Han's kinaesthetic representation of flesh as food that provides erotic nourishment—which both of their female protagonists experience in their bodies as sensual pleasure—enables us to understand the protagonists' activities as examples of their agency and resistance, rather than as being co-opted under titillation and pornography. The sensual pleasure that women from these cultural sites experience through their bodily practices of modification is shown to inform them as to the 'qualities' of their nonheteronormative sexual desires—that is, what they are 'hungry' for and how they can 'nourish' themselves adequately, even as they are imbricated within pornography. In other words, through bodily-kinaesthetic intelligence, they gain a kind of erotic understanding and self-knowledge of one's own cravings or needs, as well as knowing how to feed those cravings in a way that satisfies oneself. In turn, these qualities invite subjects to effect change, as the female protagonists' sensual pleasure also enables other

women around them to be awakened to their own non-heteronormative sexual desires.

Yet we have also begun to see an element of violence to these bodily interactions. After all, to starve someone (and thus to silence them) is a form of violence. Starvation is silent, but it is very visible. We have begun to see how both authors make starvation visible, by showing voracious appetite (Lucy) and by showing it through force-feeding (Yeong-hye)—stuffing these bodies with the flesh of other bodies as food. In fact, by the end of both novels, both authors do not only make starvation and hunger visible through these motions of eating and not eating, but also as a violent practice of scarring or marking the body—specifically in relation to wartime militaristic violence, as seen in Yeong-hye's Mongolian mark. Eating and biting into flesh, these activities leave visible marks on the body—specifically the skin—as per the rosette and the Mongolian mark.

These visible body marks of the rosette and the Mongolian mark raise the question: how do globalisation forces homogenise bodies and their movements in visible ways? Considering that both Lucy and Yeong-hye's naked bodies are also the subjects of photographs and video art—determining how they are represented to other people—how might we understand this violent determination of the visibility of bodies specifically in relation to a contemporary globalised world that is very much shaped by and through media? When media representations of bodies dictate local-global perceptions and cause a divide in local-global lived experiences, how can resistance be enacted and agency recognised?

To understand the interplay of all these elements, we can move the argument on now to consider skin, war, and media. For in the contemporary era of globalisation, the arena of mediatised war has very much shaped our experience of the world, which we will see in the next chapter in the contexts of Nigeria and Japan. We will see how media representations of certain people become weaponised amidst war on a local and global level.

In terms of bodily kinaesthesia, we can think of these media representations in terms of the 'body image'. Accordingly, we can move forward through the various engagements with flesh—of the tongue, hands, mouth, and lips—to the skin and what the latter offers us by way of a kinaesthetic mode of engagement with the world in relation to the 'body image'. The skin is a constitutive layer to all these body parts, while also being a multi-layered,

dynamic organ itself, growing and interactive with the world as a bodily substance that both ‘protects us from others and exposes us to them’¹³¹—which is also what happens when bodies eat each other, as flesh touches flesh (even when they push away from each other), and the skin becomes the contact substance for this interaction. In a sense, we can begin to think of the skin as ‘a fleshy interface’—the mediating layer not just between bodies, but also between bodies and worlds.¹³² Furthermore, being (as we have seen) the bodily substance or layer that bears most visibly the mark of violence (including that of war), thinking through the skin can help us consider how particular-universal, local-global tensions play out at the level of the body—especially in relation to the transmission of ‘body images’. Specifically, thinking through the skin enables us to examine discrepancies between what is broadcasted and seen by the rest of the world and what is locally experienced.

In the next chapter, then, I will follow this logical sequence to consider how the skin is kinaesthetically deployed for resistance during the globalised mediatiation of war in the contemporary era.

¹³¹ Sara Ahmed and Jackie Stacey, ‘Introduction: Dermographies’, in *Thinking Through the Skin*, ed. by Sarah Ahmed and Jackie Stacey (London: Routledge, 2001), pp. 1-17 (p. 1).

¹³² *Ibid.*, p. 1.

3

Treating Skins

From the previous chapter, we have begun to get a sense of how human skins can bear the mark of violent histories. The Mongolian mark that remains on Yeong-hye, the female protagonist of Han Kang's novel *The Vegetarian* (2015), particularly operates as a corporeal reminder of wartime militaristic violence. But we have also seen that this 'vegetal' Mongolian mark inspires Yeong-hye's brother-in-law, an artist and a military graduate, to make video art that is based on her, suggesting that we should also think about how bodies at war are mediated in the contemporary era. The visibility of the Mongolian mark on Yeong-hye's body—specifically her skin—is suggestive for thinking about how globalisation forces violently homogenise bodies and their movements in visible ways. Media plays an important role in how this violence is locally enacted, particularly with the burgeoning contemporary mediation of war:

As a result of changes in the communications technologies available to news media, citizen media and to militaries themselves, media are becoming part of the practices of warfare to the point that the conduct of war cannot be understood unless one carefully accounts for the role of media in it. This is what it means to speak of war as *mediatized*.¹

How might we think about how forces within globalisation violently homogenise bodies and their movements in visible ways in terms of bodily kinaesthesia? By bodily kinaesthesia, I refer to how sentient bodies move and engage with the world through time and space through a form of 'corporeal consciousness' which produces their lived experiences of a globalising world.² I propose we extend the insights of my previous chapter by exploring this through the bodily practice of 'treating' the skin. Indeed, the artist not only paints flowers

¹ Andrew Hoskins and Ben O'Loughlin, *War and Media: The Emergence of Diffused War* (Cambridge: Polity, 2010), p. 4.

² Lisa Blackman, *The Body: The Key Concepts* (Oxford and New York: Berg, 2008), p. 83.

on Yeong-hye's body but also films himself doing so. Under his brush, Yeong-hye's skin becomes a canvas—a medium—and this act of painting on the body can be considered as a method of 'treating' the skin.

The word 'treating' recalls the conservation and restoration techniques of artworks, which I find to be a kinaesthetic practice. For David Bomford, determining which techniques are suitable for the treatment of specific artworks are often not simply a question of aesthetic choice, but rather, involve the manipulation of the medium to represent experience in a certain way:

Conservation and restoration care are, I suppose, forms of triage—not just in deciding which works to treat and which to leave alone, but also in choosing which aspects of their forms and histories to suppress and which to make evident. By action or inaction, the conservator edits the visible history of a work of art, selects particular narratives of the genesis, survival, and later embellishment of a work of art, and presents them for interpretation.³

We get a sense of how Yeong-hye's skin is 'treated' or manipulated to represent her particular experience in a certain way in *The Vegetarian* from how the artist's filming of himself painting on her body is part of the video art. We also get a sense of how the artist's representation of his particular experience is still mediated and interacts with a global audience as he shares his video art with a fellow artist, who praises it as being 'so different from anything you've made before'.⁴ As such, Han's depiction of this practice of skin 'treatment' as kinaesthetic is sensitive to the workings of mediality—'the way in which media texts are interwoven into our lives; that is, how the continuity and familiarity of these representations interact with our everyday media practices'.⁵

The two contemporary literary novels that I consider in this chapter—Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie's *Half of a Yellow Sun* (2006)⁶ and Haruki Murakami's *The Wind-Up Bird Chronicle* (1998)⁷—also show this sensitivity, at the localities of Nigeria and Japan respectively. In both texts, we see that people

³ David Bomford, 'The Conservator as Narrator: Changed Perspectives in the Conservation of Paintings', in *Personal Viewpoints: Thoughts about Paintings Conservation*, ed. by Mark Leonard (Los Angeles: Getty Publications, 2003), pp. 1-12 (p. 4).

⁴ Han Kang, *The Vegetarian*, trans. by Deborah Smith (London: Portobello Books, 2015), p. 99.

⁵ Hoskins and O'Loughlin, p. 27.

⁶ Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie, *Half of a Yellow Sun* (London: Fourth Estate, 2014). Further references are given after quotations in the text.

⁷ Haruki Murakami, *The Wind-Up Bird Chronicle*, trans. by Jay Rubin (London: Vintage, 2003). Further references are given after quotations in the text.

at these localities are caught in the midst of mediatised war and have their lived experiences homogenised in global media, amidst what Andrew Hoskins and Ben O'Loughlin have called 'an age of universal comparison'⁸. To understand how both authors show global media representations as conflicting local, particular lived experiences of war, I argue that we can examine the practices of skin 'treatment' as presented in their respective texts.

In *Half of a Yellow Sun*, the skin 'treatments' take the form of bleaching, colouring, and oiling. In *The Wind-Up Bird Chronicle*, these take the form of flaying and prosthetic reconstruction. Specifically, both authors' presentations of such acts of 'treating' skin—which render the skin as a 'fleshy interface'⁹ between body and world—show how local actors themselves resist these representations through their kinaesthetic practices of modifying how their bodies are represented in the media. Simultaneously, both authors' sensitivity to mediality through the skin as an interface reflects their being part of generations that do not have personal experience of the wars that they are writing about—the 1967 Nigeria-Biafra war for Adichie, and the 1941 Asia-Pacific war for Murakami.¹⁰ With the plethora of information presently available about these wars—online and otherwise—their novels reflect both authors' concern with how these images are consumed, shared, and recontextualised by contemporary audiences, and how resistance is enacted amidst this global media ecology.

I will elaborate on how the skin works as a fleshy interface in a later section. Throughout this chapter, I will also draw on this understanding of the skin as a fleshy interface to show how these practices by these local actors exemplify embodied resistance, by which I mean the act of modifying one's bodily practices such that 'motor decisions' are made that challenge cultural

⁸ Hoskins and O'Loughlin, p. 18.

⁹ Sara Ahmed and Jackie Stacey, 'Introduction: Dermographies', in *Thinking Through the Skin*, ed. by Sarah Ahmed and Jackie Stacey (London: Routledge, 2001), pp. 1-17 (p. 1).

¹⁰ Adichie was born eight years after Biafra and states: 'I grew up in the shadow of Biafra. I grew up hearing "before the war" and "after the war stories"; it was as if the war had somehow divided the memories of my family.' Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie, 'The Story Behind the Book', *chimamanda.com* <<http://chimamanda.com/books/half-of-a-yellow-sun/the-story-behind-the-book/>> [accessed 27 July 2017]. Murakami was born in 1949, during the post-World War II baby boom. 'Japan must apologise for WWII until it is forgiven: novelist Haruki Murakami', *The Straits Times*, 17 April 2015 <<http://www.straitstimes.com/asia/east-asia/japan-must-apologise-for-wwii-until-it-is-forgiven-novelist-haruki-murakami>> [accessed 21 September 2016].

meanings.¹¹ In the next section, I will elaborate on the mediatisation of war under contemporary globalisation to show how certain people and their particular lived experiences at their localities are marginalised amidst this age of universal comparison.

GLOBALISED MEDIATISED WAR

On 18 August 2016, images of a five-year-old Syrian boy named Omran Daqneesh, with his face bloodied and dust-covered from an Aleppo airstrike, were circulated around the world through social media and newspapers, causing international outrage. Filmed by Aleppo-based journalist Mustafa al-Sarout and shared on social media platform Twitter by the Aleppo Media Centre—a Syrian opposition activist group of which al-Sarout is a member—Daqneesh quickly became a symbol of the wretchedness of the Syrian war.¹² His photograph was widely used to illustrate the brutality of the Assad regime as it tried to crush the opposition in Aleppo, Syria's largest city.¹³ The US state department also described the little boy as 'the real face of what's going on in Syria'¹⁴.

But a year later, new photographs have emerged of Daqneesh appearing healthy and recovered, sitting on his father's knee. Notably, Daqneesh and his family have appeared on news channels that are supportive of President Bashar al-Assad, although news outlets such as *The New York Times* and *The Telegraph* raise observations that 'this could be part of a calculated public relations campaign by the Syrian government'¹⁵ and that 'It is possible the family felt

¹¹ Carrie Noland, *Agency and Embodiment: Performing Gestures/Producing Culture* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2009), p. 3.

¹² Kareem Shaheen, 'I filmed the Syrian boy pulled from the rubble – his wasn't a rare case', *the guardian*, 18 August 2016 <<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2016/aug/18/i-filmed-the-syrian-boy-pulled-from-the-rubble-his-wasnt-a-rare-case>> [accessed 13 July 2017] (para. 12 of 23).

¹³ Raf Sanchez, 'New photos emerge of Omran Daqneesh, the boy who became a symbol of Aleppo's suffering', *The Telegraph*, 5 June 2017 <<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2017/06/05/new-photos-emerge-omran-daqneesh-boy-became-symbol-aleppo-suffering/>> [accessed 25 July 2017] (para. 4 of 13).

¹⁴ Shaheen (para. 19).

¹⁵ Megan Specia and Maher Samaan, 'Syrian Boy Who Became Image of Civil War Reappears', *The New York Times*, 6 June 2017 <<https://www.nytimes.com/2017/06/06/world/middleeast/omran-daqneesh-syria-aleppo.html?mcubz=2>> [accessed 25 July 2017] (para. 3 of 28).

forced to take part in the interview for their own safety'¹⁶. Such conflicting uses of Daqneesh's photograph and face in the media with regard to the Syrian war exemplifies what Hoskins and O'Loughlin have referred to as the mediatisation of war in the contemporary era.

Earlier, I have provided Hoskins and O'Loughlin's preliminary explanation of the contemporary mediatisation of war. They further clarify that their use of the term 'mediatisation' is different from the term 'mediation', drawing on the distinction that Stig Hjarvard makes between the two:

Mediation describes the concrete act of communication by means of a medium in a specific social context. By contrast, mediatization refers to a more long-lasting process, whereby social and cultural institutions and modes of interaction are changed as a consequence of the growth of the media's influence.¹⁷

In his formulation of a theory of mediatisation that is able to address the both intensified and changing importance of the media in culture and society, Hjarvard sees mediatisation not as a universal process that characterises all societies, but as primarily a development that has accelerated particularly in the last years of the twentieth century in modern, highly industrialised, and chiefly western societies, that is, Europe, USA, Japan, Australia and so forth.¹⁸

Yet mediatisation is also interlinked with globalising processes:

As globalization progresses, more and more regions and cultures will be affected by mediatization, but there may be considerable differences in the influence mediatization exerts. Globalization is related to mediatization in at least two ways: on the one hand, globalization presumes the existence of the technical means to extend communication and interaction over long distances and, on the other hand, it propels the process of mediatization by institutionalizing mediated communication and interaction in many new contexts.¹⁹

Understanding the effects of mediatisation beyond the specified societies, then, can expand our understanding of globalised mediatisation, and enable us to be aware of people who might become marginalised under such processes.

¹⁶ Sanchez (para. 9).

¹⁷ Stig Hjarvard, 'The Mediatization of Society: A Theory of the Media as Agents of Social and Cultural Change', *Nordicom Review*, 29.2 (2008), 105-34 (p. 112). Cited in Hoskins and O'Loughlin, p. 5.

¹⁸ Hjarvard, p. 113.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 113.

Considering the different contexts of Nigeria in *Half of a Yellow Sun* and of Japan in *The Wind-Up Bird Chronicle* alongside each other would help us with this. As we will see below, Hoskins and O'Loughlin assert that as we live in a contemporary new media ecology, we also begin to live in 'an age of universal comparison' where we can compare media, ourselves, and compare others more easily and instantly than before. Indeed, even as Daqneesh's face has been broadcasted to the world as the 'real face of what's going on in Syria', there are other bodies that remain unseen.²⁰ War itself is imbricated in globalised mediatisation.

I would now like to elaborate on Hoskins and O'Loughlin's sense of the mediatisation of war and its workings in relation to the new media ecology and the age of universal comparison. Their interest in the contemporary mediatisation of war is specific to their notion of 'diffused war'²¹. They see diffused war as emerging from 'the genuinely paradigmatic shift occurring in modern media and in modern warfare', wherein the 'conventions of so-called "traditional" warfare have been splintered by the availability and connectivity of the principal site of war today: the electronic and digital media'.²² Particularly since the twenty-first century, they note that:

Thanks to media technologies, we live in a new media ecology marked by—terrorized by—'effects without causes' [...] Things just seem to happen 'out of nowhere', such as the 9/11 attacks in the United States. Of course, this is not strictly the case. [...] But instant recording, archiving and distribution of images and stories add a chaotic element to any action. Nobody knows *who* will see and event, *where* and *when* they will see it or *how* they will interpret it. Nobody knows how the reactions of people locally or around the world will feed back into the event, setting off a chain of other events, anywhere, in which anybody may get caught up.²³

Media enable a perpetual connectivity that appears to be a key modulator of insecurity and security today, amplifying our awareness of distant conflicts or

²⁰ Lina Sergie Attar writes: 'Every day there are so many Omrans whose images you will never see and whose names you will never know. And unlike lucky Omran, those kids don't survive. This is not a hashtag moment. This is not a viral moment. This is a moment that must become a movement to end the war.' Lina Sergie Attar, 'Viewpoint: Is bloodied Syrian boy Omran Daqneesh just another image?', *BBC News*, 20 August 2016 <<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-middle-east-37134986>> [accessed 26 July 2017] (para. 25 of 29).

²¹ Hoskins and O'Loughlin, p. 2.

²² *Ibid.*, pp. 2-7.

²³ *Ibid.*, p. 2.

close-to-home threats, yet containing these insecurities in comforting news packages.²⁴ This connectivity is the principal mechanism through which media is weaponised, made a tool of warfare.²⁵ Diffused war, then, is that which is '*immersed in and produced through a new "media ecology"*'²⁶.

It is not this chapter's interest to go into the characteristics of diffused war; nor does it argue that the wars depicted in the novels are diffused war. But as mentioned earlier, an integral part of Hoskins and O'Loughlin's account of diffused war is the mediatisation of war in the global 'new media ecology' that we inhabit, which I would like to hone in on. Their conceptualisation and historicisation of the mediatisation of war is useful for reading literary representations of the interpenetration of war and media in contemporary globalisation.

Hoskins and O'Loughlin detail shifts between two phases of the mediatisation of war that impacts our experience of inhabiting global media ecology. They observe that, particularly in the late twentieth century, the strategising, fighting and legitimising of contemporary warfare have been oriented around a 'mass' media.²⁷ As seen in the TV 'living-room' war of Vietnam, television became the pre-eminent medium over this period of 'information' war, with the 'broadcast era' being dominated by Big Media such as the BBC, CNN or national newspapers, and news-making being entirely the province of journalists and the economics of publishing and broadcasting creating large, powerful institutions and news networks.²⁸ With satellite news-gathering replacing the electronic news-gathering of the 1970s, however, the impact of Big Media upon the character and the waging of warfare went global.²⁹ Hoskins and O'Loughlin pinpoint this period as the 'first phase' of the mediatisation of warfare: 'situations in which those conducting war are aware of themselves as involved in a process being recorded and disseminated via media, and media consider their coverage as part of the war itself'³⁰. Citing the CNN's successful monopolisation of the 1991 Gulf War as an example, they observe:

²⁴ Hoskins and O'Loughlin, p. 2.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 2.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 7.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 15.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 16.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 16.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 16.

‘What defined this stage as mediatized was that the very knowledge of the phenomenon developed into a self-reflexive enterprise: media knew and advertised the fact that they offered a “front row seat” as they “brought us history” as it unfolded.’³¹

The second phase of mediatisation is ‘the broader impact of media upon processes of social change so that everyday life is increasingly embedded in the mediascape’:

We are not outside media, separate from it, as independent entities ‘decoding’ what is sent to us [...] The proliferation of new media technologies renders more of life matter to be recorded, disseminated and debated on near-instantaneous and deterritorialized scales. Hence, we now live in a ‘new media ecology’ in which people, events and news media have become increasingly connected and interpenetrated through the technological compressions of time-space. We are moving towards an ‘age of universal comparison’ in which we can compare media, compare ourselves, and compare others more easily and instantly than before.³³

In this second phase of mediatisation which is ‘characterised by some as being satiated and overwhelmed by a “torrent” of media data’, and focusing particularly on the image, Hoskins and O’Loughlin argue for a change of emphasis in the study of visibility and war—from a concern with ‘representationality’ to that of ‘mediality’.³⁴

They argue that the shift to digital media has unsettled the relationship between an image and what it represents, since the moment of truthfulness may no longer lie at the moment a photograph is taken, when the image is physically marked on film or captured digitally, but with the consumer or user who sifts the multiple and often competing images emerging from contemporary war and conflict events.³⁶ Hoskins and O’Loughlin’s argument for ‘mediality’, then, calls for a move from the exclusive focus on the objectivity and accuracy of an image to the object being represented, to the sense that the significance of images may lie simply in our relationship to them: the way we consume them, forward them

³¹ Hoskins and O’Loughlin, p. 16.

³³ *Ibid.*, pp. 17-18.

³⁴ Hoskins and O’Loughlin note that the image has a special status in the study of warfare: ‘As a tool of persuasion and, indeed, revelation or exposure of truth (particularly of the “real” and brutal bodily destructive consequences of military conflict and terrorism), the resonance of the visual is unparalleled in the propaganda and counter-propaganda of warfare.’ *Ibid.*, pp. 20-21.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 21.

to friends or family, and edit and recontextualise them ourselves.³⁷ While not treating ‘content’ and ‘mediality’ as exclusive categories, they find ‘mediality’ useful for understanding the ‘medialogical significance’ of media content and formats through which discourses emerge and perpetuate, in order to account for their status and impact.³⁸ Running throughout their account is the question of what images do.³⁹

A FLESHY INTERFACE

From the conflicting uses of Daqneesh’s photograph—his face in particular—in global circulation, we can think about what images do through the skin. The changing presentations of Daqneesh’s bloodied, dust-covered face as ‘the real face of what’s going on in Syria’ and his clean face in later televised images suggest that the skin becomes the bodily substance through which war experiences are determined and presented to a global audience. Attending to the skin in kinaesthetic terms—specifically in relation to the media visibility of bodies—can also make us aware of those who are unseen and thus marginalised in global mediatised war, and to recognise their particular lived experiences.

This sense of certain people being unseen in a globalised mediatised world suggests bodies that are invisible or have disappeared. As mentioned in the Introduction, Arthur Kroker and Marilouise Kroker have examined the visibility-invisibility of bodies under contemporary mediatisation in terms of skin, but I find their methodology limited for analysing resistance practices in literature. To map out their approach, they asserted that the body’s pervasiveness in contemporary mediatisation paradoxically suggested that the organic body had disappeared, and that what we experienced as the body was only a fantastic simulacra of body rhetorics:

the aestheticization of the body and its dissolution into a semiurgy of floating body parts reveals that *we* are being processed through a media

³⁷ Hoskins and O’Loughlin, p. 21.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 189.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 21.

scene consisting of our own (exteriorized) body organs in the form of second-order simulacra.⁴⁰

Specifically regarding media images of bodies in the fashion industry, the skin has been ‘transformed into a screen-effect for a last, decadent and desperate, search for desire after desire’⁴¹.

There are two aspects to their analysis. Firstly, understanding the skin as a ‘floating body part’ being transformed into a ‘screen-effect’ suggests that the body has been dissected through mediatisation. The ‘flat’ skin now becomes an image or *representation* of the body that invites the gaze of the world; correspondingly, the ‘volume’ of the ‘entire’ body disappears. Underlying the dissected or fragmented organic body is the sense that media screens are flat, not bodies.⁴²

Secondly, as body images rapidly circulate through globalised media in late capitalist, postmodern culture, the image of the body is no longer used to inform or promote a product in the ordinary sense, but is increasingly geared to manipulating desires and tastes that may or may not have anything to do with the product to be sold.⁴³ The image has become a commodity in itself, and increased focus on the rapid and accurate replication of such images exemplify the issue of the ‘simulacrum’—a state of near perfect replication that the difference between the original and the copy becomes almost impossible to spot.⁴⁴ The ‘flat’ skin reproduced through these countless replications—standing in for the entire body as ‘body image’—has now become a simulacrum for the entire body. The ‘flat’ skin as a separate body part also suggests a conceptualisation of skin as a bodily covering or hollow mould that conceals the fact that the entire body has disappeared—a manner of media ‘treatment’.

In the new media ecology, however, the Krokers’ approach is limited because their sense of the skin as a simulacra suggests a concern with ‘authentic’ and ‘inauthentic’ media representations of bodies, thus the *content* of the

⁴⁰ Arthur Kroker and Marilouise Kroker, ‘Body Digest: Theses on the Disappearing Body in the Hyper-Modern Condition’, *Body Invaders: Panic Sex in America*, ed. Arthur Kroker and Marilouise Kroker (New York: St Martin’s, 1987), pp. i-xvi (pp. ii-iii).

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, p. ii.

⁴² Bernadette Wegenstein, *Getting Under The Skin: The Body and Media Theory* (Cambridge, MA: Massachusetts Institute of Technology Press, 2006), p. 122.

⁴³ David Harvey, *The Condition of Postmodernity: An Enquiry into the Origins of Cultural Change* (Cambridge: Blackwell Publishers, 1989), p. 287.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 287-89.

representation—its ‘representationality’ rather than its ‘mediality’. As Hoskins and O’Loughlin note, the rise of digital media in global mediated war makes it important to understand how images of bodies as they are disseminated relate to us by way how we consume, share, edit, and recontextualise them through our everyday media practices. In other words, the significance of these images of bodies now lie in relation to our own practices of constructing our own body images through media.

Correspondingly, the issue of the ‘original’ versus the ‘copy’ is not as pertinent in the weaponisation of media in contemporary diffused war, amid the torrent of media data and the increasing interpenetration between people, events, and news media. Rather, the dynamic interactivity of the construction and reconstruction of body images in mediated war calls for a reconsideration of ‘body image’ in media (which the skin as bodily substance still stands for) not as simulacrum but as contingent on the fact that no visible image reaches us unmediated—their visibility rests on their particular mediality, which controls the perceptions of them and creates the viewer’s attention.⁴⁵ This recognises that the body is always present and active in its mediation. In this account, the ‘invisibility’ of bodies in a mediated world is also linked to mediality.

We can still register the active presence of the mediated body in the way the skin is ‘treated’. But what has changed here is a different conception of how the skin is related to the body itself. Instead of seeing the skin as a body part that can be separated from the body so as to ‘disappear’ the entire organic body and becoming a hollow mould under mediation, we can consider the skin as a mediating layer itself—a ‘fleshy interface between bodies and worlds’⁴⁶. Here, the skin is a constitutive part of the body but it is also multi-layered, dynamic, growing, and interactive with the media environment. By attending to the forms and folds of living skin and also conceptually taking the shape of such skin, as it forms and re-forms, unfold and refolds, we gain a dynamic understanding of this outer covering of the body that both ‘protects us from others and exposes us to them’.⁴⁷

⁴⁵ Hans Belting, ‘Image, Medium, Body: A New Approach to Iconology’, *Critical Inquiry*, 31.2 (2005), 302-19 (p. 304).

⁴⁶ Ahmed and Stacey, p. 1.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 1.

Going back to the media images of bodies, thinking of the skin in kinaesthetic terms as an interface allows us to understand body images as *happening* or as being *negotiated* between bodies and media.⁴⁸ This recognises images as not merely produced by their media, but as *transmitted* in this way.⁴⁹ Attending to how the skin is ‘treated’ as an interface, then, enables us to understand the global transmission of images by large media outlets and what images do as a kinaesthetic process. We can also recognise how war participants whose bodies and facial skins do not fit formal media representations and are thus rendered ‘invisible’ transmit their own media images, forwarding alternative reconstructions that resist how they are represented in the global sphere.

In the preceding two paragraphs, I have suggested that attending to literary representations of skin in terms of bodily kinaesthesia—as a ‘fleshy interface’—can help us understand the workings of and tensions underlying the transmission of media images during war in the contemporary era. Another concept that might be relevant when considering skin in relation to media communication is that of hapticity. The word ‘haptic’ is an umbrella term denoting one or more of the following experiences: touch (the active or passive experience of the human skin, subcutaneous flesh, viscera and related nerve-endings); kinaesthesia (the body’s sense of its own movement); proprioception (the body’s sense of its orientation in space); and the vestibular sense (that of balance, reliant upon the inner ear).⁵³ Hapticity is also linked with contact and communication, as the Greek etymology of the term means ‘able to come into contact with’: ‘As a function of the skin [...] the haptic—the sense of touch—constitutes the reciprocal *contact* between us and the environment, both housing and extending communicative interface’.⁵⁴ Considering these definitions, my focus on kinaesthesia does speak to the concept of hapticity.

My preference for using kinaesthesia over hapticity, however, is because I want to focus specifically on the body’s sense of its own movement in space as it engages with the world and expresses its own particular lived experience of global mediatised war. As mentioned earlier, I want to hone on the movement of

⁴⁸ Belting, p. 311.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 305.

⁵³ Abbie Garrington, *Haptic Modernism: Touch and the Tactile in Modernist Writing* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2013), p. 16.

⁵⁴ Guilianina Bruno, *Atlas of Emotion: Journeys in Art, Architecture and Film* (London: Verso, 2007), p. 6.

the forms and folds of living skin as it forms and re-forms, folds and unfolds—moving as a mediating layer between body and world that enables us to understand how local people experience being represented in global media in an age of universal comparison, and how in turn, they reshape such media representations of their war experiences. Other aspects of the haptic such as the sensory experience of touch, as well as the vestibular sense, are not the primary focus in my analysis.

Additionally, in linking the kinaesthetic movement of skin to the practice of rendering one's lived experience of the world through media—whether via video, photography, or writing—I have earlier employed the concept of mediality to understand our relationships to images and their dissemination in the contemporary global media ecology. Another concept that might seem relevant here, particularly in relation to literary representation, would be that of ekphrasis. Ekphrasis—a term extensively used by Greek rhetoricians of the first five centuries A.D.—is 'a descriptive account bringing what is illustrated vividly before one's sight'.⁵⁵ In a contemporary context, many scholars make use of James A. Heffernan's general conception of ekphrasis as 'the verbal representation of graphic representation'⁵⁶. This sense of ekphrasis as a literary mode that 'explicitly represents representation itself'⁵⁷ might seem more relevant in analysing certain examples mentioned later in this chapter, such as Ugwu's attempt to capture Biafran war suffering through his writing and Murakami's graphic exposure of a Japanese spy's flayed body.

However as asserted in the Introduction, I believe that these novels evoke the presence of living, antagonistic bodies and their practices of local, particular resistance against global forces. Taking the body and its practices as my starting point, I am interested in analysing how Adichie and Murakami themselves take particular, lived experiences of war in an era of global mediatization as their starting points to inform their own experiments with literary representation. This is why I refer to embodied practices such as conservation and restoration techniques of artworks as they manipulate the medium to represent experience in

⁵⁵ Shadi Bartsch, *Decoding the Ancient Novel: The Reader and the Role of Description in Heliodorus and Achilles Tatius* (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1989), p. 9.

⁵⁶ James A. Heffernan, 'Ekphrasis and Representation', *New Literary History*, 22.2 (1991), 297-316 (p. 299).

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 300.

a certain way, to convey the ‘treatment’ of media images and mediality. In doing this, I consider the media transmission of ‘body images’ from an embodied perspective and how these body images are produced and negotiated amidst media, as well as the universal-particular, local-global tensions underlying this negotiation. Ekphrasis, with its emphasis on verbal representation, takes the text as the starting point and would assume the body as modelled on the text.

THE AGE OF TELEVISED DISASTER

Set in 1960s Nigeria, *Half of a Yellow Sun* tells of the country’s three-year civil war that leads to the secession of its Igbo-dominant southeastern region. This region becomes known to the world as the independent Republic of Biafra. Training our attention on the activities on the ground, Adichie’s novel is told through the perspectives of three characters that are locally based in Biafra: Olanna Ozobia (the elder daughter of a wealthy Igbo man with government connections), Ugwu (a houseboy employed by Olanna’s lover, Odenigbo), and Richard Churchill (the English lover of Olanna’s twin sister, Kainene). Beyond their local positions, we are also given a sense of how the Nigeria-Biafra war plays out in the global sphere.

In her novel, Adichie keeps the global visibility of the Nigeria-Biafra war in the background which is significant, considering how this war made worldwide headlines, above all for the major famine caused by the Nigerian state’s (federal military government, FMG) blockade of the separatist Republic of Biafra in the country’s east.⁵⁸ Lasse Heerten and A. Dirk Moses note that the crisis drove prominent academics and journalists to mobilise public opinion, prompted a major international relief operation to bring supplies to starving civilians and exercised the minds of statemen and -women from the great powers to the UN; they call the war ‘a genuinely global event’⁵⁹. For Michael Ignatieff, the ‘age of televised disaster’ began with the Biafran war.⁶⁰ Chima J. Korieh also

⁵⁸ Lasse Heerten and A. Dirk Moses, ‘The Nigeria-Biafra war: postcolonial conflict and the question of genocide’, *Journal of Genocide Research*, 16.2-3 (2014), 169-203 (p. 169).

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 169.

⁶⁰ Michael Ignatieff, *The warrior’s honor: ethnic war and the modern conscience* (New York: Henry Holt, 1997), p. 124. Cited in Heerten and Moses, p. 176.

observes that the civil war was the most reported conflict in contemporary Africa until the more recent genocide in Rwanda.⁶¹ But Adichie's narrative tactic can be understood as her method of resisting and reconstructing the contemporary negative media portrayals of Africa. This is something she has voiced frustration about and which she traces in part to the mediatisation of the Nigeria-Biafra war:

Part of me wishes someone had kept those photographers and TV cameras away from Biafra! The image of Africa would have been different. Because it is the image—it's been modified in some ways, but the thinking behind it has been passed down to the coverage today. It's still Biafra when CNN is covering the Congo.⁶²

In *Half of a Yellow Sun*, we mostly get a sense of the globalised mediatisation of the Nigeria-Biafra war from how the main characters respond to the information they receive or that they disseminate to the rest of the world via various media. These are the radio broadcasts from local and international channels that Olanna and Ugwu tune into from home that announce Biafra's official recognition by other countries, the opinion editorial pieces (op-eds) that Richard writes for the Biafra Propaganda Directorate that are distributed overseas by their Swiss public relations firm, the photographs taken of pot-bellied Biafran children suffering from kwashiorkor that are also circulated by the Biafra Propaganda Directorate and global media outlets for humanitarian aid, and the book that Ugwu writes. In the last three examples mentioned that I will examine in more detail in subsequent sections, Adichie offers in kinaesthetic terms an understanding of the mediality of certain images that are globally circulated, through skin 'treatments'.

But before doing so, I would like to address certain issues that might be raised against *Half of a Yellow Sun* as a case study of the globalised mediatisation of war. There is the issue of the 'first phase' of mediatisation

⁶¹ Chima J. Korieh, 'Introduction: History and the Politics of Memory', in *The Nigeria-Biafra War: Genocide and the Politics of Memory*, ed. by Chima J. Korieh (New York: Cambria Press, 2012), p. 3.

⁶² Joshua Jelly-Schapiro, 'Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie', *Believer*, January 2009, 54-61 (p. 61). See also Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie, 'African "Authenticity" and the Biafran Experience' *Transition*, 99 (2008), 42-55; and Robert Birnbaum, 'Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie', *themorningnews (tmn)*, 23 October 2006.

occurring when satellite news-gathering replaced electronic news-gathering.⁶³ As mentioned earlier, this change marked how the impact of Big Media upon the very character and the waging of warfare went global. This change pivots on what has been called the ‘CNN effect’ in its coverage of the 1991 Gulf war, referring to the ‘impact of the immediate and intensive connectedness of events, key participants in those events, and audiences, where mediatized responses can be seen to feed and shape reflexively the trajectory of an event defined as news subject’.⁶⁴

This does not apply to the 1967 Nigeria-Biafra war when ‘Television war coverage came of age, and the developed world, impotent in a hundred million sitting rooms, watched their first African mass famine’.⁶⁵ Frederick Forsyth has also contrasted the slow and cumbersome process of transferring old celluloid film from Biafra to the West with present-day technological advances.⁶⁶ Moreover, digital media practices did not figure in the Nigeria-Biafra war. The relevance of mediality as a method of analysis comes into question because mediality is based on Hoskins and O’Loughlin’s observation on how media texts are interwoven into contemporary life, particularly in relation to ‘our own affective (emotional, sensory) relations with, and uses of, the gamut of digital technologies’ amid the ‘second phase’ of mediatisation.⁶⁸

Despite these issues, I contend that mediatisation and mediality are still useful for analysing *Half of a Yellow Sun*, for two reasons.

Firstly, the impact of the war through global media should not be dismissed just because it was not transmitted through satellite. Forsyth insists:

⁶³ Hoskins and O’Loughlin state in a footnote that satellite news-gathering was developed in the 1980s but only became really significant at the end of that decade. Hoskins and O’Loughlin, p. 193.

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 17.

⁶⁵ Frederick Forsyth, ‘Foreword’, in Michael Gould, *The Struggle for Modern Nigeria: The Biafran War 1967-1970* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2012), pp. xii-xiv (p. xii).

⁶⁶ Forsyth writes: ‘Today old-stagers of the war correspondents’ circuit watch in awe the technology of the new craft: the brilliant colour images, in high definition, transmitted from the most obscure rock defile or jungle clearing direct to our screens at the touch of a ‘send’ button. Back then it could take weeks. Cameramen back-hauled cumbersome kit using old celluloid film. With the film finally ‘in the can’ [...] the evidence had to reach some kind of airport. From there, perhaps in the hand baggage of a kindly missionary, it had to be flown across the world to the USA or Europe. [...] It was often screened a week after being shot. In the battle-zone much could have happened, but it was the best we could do.’ *Ibid.*, pp. xii-xiii.

⁶⁸ Hoskins and O’Loughlin, p. 27.

But for all the struggles and all the delays, those filmed reportages out of the Biafran enclave had a traumatic effect on two continents: Europe and North America. They just had not seen anything like it before.⁶⁹

More importantly, the Nigeria-Biafra war was the first postcolonial conflict to engender a transnational wave of humanitarian concern.⁷⁰ In addition to the efforts of international and non-governmental organisations to bring relief supplies into Biafra, ‘Biafra committees’ emerged across the west, raised funds for the humanitarian operation and lobbied governments and international organisations to intensify their relief efforts.⁷¹

Some of these committees evolved into NGOs that now feature in the prominent non-governmental sector of human rights politics—the most well-known example being the French Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF) which was formed by a group of young French Red Cross volunteers during the conflict.⁷²

Making use of the channels of the mass media age, this new breed of activists believed in what became known as *témoignage*, the outspoken public disclosure of what humanitarians and journalists had witnessed in the field [...] Accordingly, these ardent believers in the humanitarian cause had to break ranks with the organization that stood for humanitarian idealism since its inception a century before: the ICRC. Biafra, a new era, the age of *sans-frontiérisme*, had begun.⁷³

The transformative impact that the mediatisation of the Nigeria-Biafra war had on the field of humanitarian action recalls Hjarvard’s definition of mediatisation as ‘a more long-lasting process, whereby social and cultural institutions and modes of interaction are changed as a consequence of the growth of the media’s influence’. Analysis of the mediatisation of the Nigeria-Biafra war and its global impact can expand Hoskins and O’Loughlin’s conception of the mediatisation of war, which seems limited by a kind of technological determinism.

Secondly, the high media profile of the Nigeria-Biafra war in the summer of 1968 was due to the international dissemination of images of pot-bellied Biafran children suffering from kwashiorkor—a severe form of malnutrition.⁷⁴

⁶⁹ Forsyth, p. xiii.

⁷⁰ Heerten and Moses, p. 176.

⁷¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 176–77.

⁷² *Ibid.*, p. 177.

⁷³ *Ibid.*, p. 177.

⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 176.

Readers and audiences in the west in particular were confronted with photographs of starving children in Biafra—a new ‘third world’ icon—which made headlines for months.⁷⁵ These images are also what Adichie was referring to in an earlier quote as the ‘image of Africa’ that is still perpetuated in global media coverage today.⁷⁶ With these images, the Nigeria-Biafra war—which had until this time progressed with little awareness by the public of western democracies—captured global attention.⁷⁷

While these photographs were disseminated through conventional press and not digital media, mediality is still useful here. This is because in her novel, Adichie draws attention to how the skins of the Biafran children in these photographs are manipulated or ‘treated’ for the consumption of international audiences. But she uniquely presents this skin ‘treatment’ through Ugwu’s perspective, specifically as a section in his book. As I will show, Ugwu’s book, which forwards his own account of the war, comes across as being reflexively aware of contemporary archives and the plethora of information they contain about the Nigeria-Biafra war. We also see that Ugwu ‘treats’ the skins of these Biafran children himself as he writes his book, recontextualising their suffering as a consequence of genocide.

The issue of whether the Nigeria-Biafra was genocide is much debated, and I will address this subsequently. I will also argue more for mediality in relation to Ugwu’s book later in this chapter. But Adichie’s presentation of such skin ‘treatments’ in Ugwu’s book belies a distinctly contemporary sensibility of the ‘new media ecology’ that we live in, with an awareness of how images are captured, edited, and consumed through everyday media practices amid the mediatisation of war.⁷⁸

⁷⁵ Heerten and Moses, p. 176.

⁷⁶ Jelly-Schapiro, p. 61.

⁷⁷ Gould, p. 78.

⁷⁸ Considering Adichie’s own activity in the social media sphere, this is perhaps unsurprising. Adichie herself has very much become a figure of social media since the success of *Half of a Yellow Sun*. This can be seen from her well-received *TED* talks ‘The danger of a single story’ (October 2009) and ‘We should all be feminists’ (December 2012), which has garnered more than twelve million views and one million views respectively at the point of writing this chapter. More recently, her comments on transgender women have also sparked an immediate backlash online. David Smith, ‘Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie on transgender row: “I have nothing to apologise for”’, *theguardian*, 21 March 2017 <<https://www.theguardian.com/books/2017/mar/21/chimamanda-ngozi-adichie-nothing-to-apologise-for-transgender-women>> [accessed 5 August 2017].

BLEACHED

The question of whether the Nigeria-Biafra war was genocide is key to understanding its globalised mediatisation. Roy Doron notes:

There is comparatively little dispute that the Biafran experience was an unmitigated humanitarian catastrophe. The main issues of contention centre on the number of casualties and the role of the Nigerian military in maximizing civilian suffering. The second issue is of utmost importance, because the central question, both during and after the war, was whether the Nigerian establishment intended to commit genocide or whether the mass starvation was simply a tactic to beat the Biafrans into submission.⁷⁹

Various critics have observed that Biafran propaganda played a pivotal role in the political and diplomatic conduct of the war.⁸⁰ Correspondingly, Doron notes that for the Biafrans, it was important to convey a cogent message regarding genocide that resonated both in Biafra and around the world—something which, considering their limited resources and considerable logistical difficulties, they were very effective in doing.⁸¹ And while Adichie never explicitly refers to genocide in *Half of a Yellow Sun*—the word does not appear in her novel—it is the lived experience of genocide and the mediality of images used to convey this experience to the world that she kinaesthetically represents through skin ‘treatments’. In highlighting the mediality of these images rather than just their content, she shows how the lived experience of genocide as put forward by those marginalised and rendered ‘invisible’ amid the globalised mediatisation of war resists the global representation of these people as passive victims of the war tactic of mass starvation.

Adichie first hints at how the experience of genocide becomes represented as part of the globalised mediatisation of the Nigeria-Biafra war in a phone conversation between Richard and Major Madu (a friend of Kainene’s). In this instance, Madu tries to recruit Richard to write op-ed articles on the war for the Biafra Propaganda Directorate, which will subsequently be distributed

⁷⁹ Roy Doron, ‘Marketing genocide: Biafran propaganda strategies during the Nigerian civil war, 1967-70’, *Journal of Genocide Research*, 16.2-3 (2014), 227-46 (pp. 227-28).

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 227. See also Douglas Anthony, “‘Resourceful and Progressive Blackmen’: Modernity and Race in Biafra, 1967-70”, *The Journal of African History*, 51.1 (2010), 41-61; and Françoise Ugochukwu, ‘The Nigerian civil war and its media: groping for clues’, *Media, War & Conflict*, 3.2 (2010), 182-201.

⁸¹ *Ibid.*, p. 228.

through the Directorate's overseas public relations partner to a variety of European allies (p. 304). Ostensibly valued for his position as an 'experienced insider' (p. 304), Richard ultimately agrees to this role knowing that the value of his contribution primarily lies in the colour of his skin. In fact, when he confronts Madu about this, the latter does not mince words:

Of course I asked because you are white. They will take what you write more seriously because you are white. Look, the truth is that this is not your war: This is not your cause. Your government will evacuate you in a minute if you ask them to. So it is not enough to carry limp branches and shout *power, power* to show that you support Biafra. If you really want to contribute, this is the way you can. The world has to know the truth of what is happening, because they simply cannot remain silent while we die. They will believe a white man who lives in Biafra and who is not a professional journalist.

(p. 305)

We begin to get a sense that Madu 'treats' the skin that constitutes the image or the 'face' of Biafra that is shown to the world. Madu 'bleaches' the black 'Belgian chocolate' (p. 56) African skin into white to convey the seriousness of Biafran casualties to a mediated, mostly Western audience whose attention is captured by other instances of war violence—'People are dying in Sudan and Palestine and Vietnam. People are dying everywhere' (p. 374). Op-ed articles are often accompanied by a photograph of the writer's face in the byline, which means that Richard's white skin—the paleness which Ugwu equates to that of chicken skin (p. 86)—would be projected globally and visibly as a reliable source of information about the Nigeria-Biafra war. This skin 'bleaching'—like the digital editing of a photograph—kinaesthetically registers how Richard is deployed by Madu to broadcast a certain 'genocidal' experience to the world: that the Biafrans are dying in great numbers, and that the world 'simply cannot remain silent while we die'.

The question might arise as to whether Madu's tactic can be considered resistance since it seems to pander to global audiences as he uses Richard's white skin to gain attention for his cause. But as Erynn Masi de Casanova and Afshan Jafar remind us, context matters for understanding embodied resistance⁸². I

⁸² Erynn Masi de Casanova and Afshan Jafar, 'The Body as a Site of Resistance', in *The SAGE Handbook of Resistance*, ed. by David Courpasson and Steven Vallas (London: SAGE Publications, 2016), pp. 139-155 (p. 141).

contend that in this case, Madu's kinaesthetic practice of modifying the 'face' of Biafra is a form of resistance because it involves motor intentionality—the dynamic engagement of the body in a specific context that invites subjects to effect change, which we hear from his speech to Richard.⁸³ Richard's white skin critically enables the 'continuity and familiarity of these representations [to] interact with our everyday media practices'. Madu's 'bleaching' of black Biafran skin modifies and reconstructs the African face as it is mediated and enters into the 'new media ecology', so that the 'we' who are dying in his emotional declaration become familiar and included into this globalised mediated sphere. Indeed, the emotive impact of this declaration is such that Richard later repurposes it for the title of a book he never writes called 'The World Was Silent When We Died', which would have been 'a narrative of Biafra's difficult victory, an indictment of the world' (p. 375). That Ugwu eventually takes this title for his own book suggests another reconstruction of the 'face' of Biafra. I will come back to this point later.

Simultaneously, Madu's skin 'bleaching' kinaesthetically exemplifies the remarkable agility of Biafran propaganda in adapting to the war's changing circumstances.⁸⁴ The persuasiveness of Biafran propaganda for an international audience is especially important at this point in time of Richard and Madu's conversation. As seen in the novel, the two men are discussing the possible fall of Port Harcourt, Biafra's principal port town and remaining access to the sea (p. 307). The eventual fall of Port Harcourt was a turning point in the war, for it turned the secessionist state into a landlocked enclave and pushed the Biafran population into the famine that would become a humanitarian crisis.⁸⁵

GLOSS

Since the fall of Port Harcourt was still an unknown factor at this point in the novel, the global image of Biafra that Richard's skin is deployed to broadcast remains that of Biafra's efforts to fight for its self-determination as a modern nation. Madu tells Richard:

⁸³ Noland, p. 4.

⁸⁴ Doron, p. 227.

⁸⁵ Heerten and Moses, p. 175.

You can tell them how we continue to stand and prevail even though Nigerian MiG-Seventeens, Il-Twenty-eights, and L-Twenty-nine Delfins flown by Russians and Egyptians are bombing us every day, and how some of them are using transport planes and just crudely rolling out bombs to kill women and children, and how the British and the Soviets are in an unholy alliance giving more and more arms to Nigeria, and how the Americans have refused to help us, and how our relief flights come in at night with no lights because the Nigerians will shoot them down during the day....

(p. 305)

At this point, the ‘we’ who are dying refer to the casualties suffered from Biafra’s fight for self-determination. But there are also hints of ‘a global conspiracy against Biafra’s self-determination’ in Madu’s account that suggests the western world is complicit in this silence, also put forward in Ugwu’s book: ‘He writes about the world that remained silent while Biafrans died. He argues that Britain inspired this silence. The arms and advice that Britain give Nigeria shaped other countries.’ (p. 258) Doron notes this sense of a global conspiracy to be a line of propaganda that would repeat itself as the tide of the war turned increasingly against Biafra, especially after the federal capture of Port Harcourt in mid-1968.⁸⁶ From his study of Biafra propaganda cartoons, Doron observes that this sense of a global conspiracy, which underlay earlier portrayals of Biafra as a strong, independent nation, viable in its own right, which would not bow to the Nigerians or their neo-colonial masters, also laid the ground for when the war took a disastrous turn in favour of the Nigerians, and the tone of Biafran propaganda shifted in the direction of genocide.⁸⁷

Doron refers to a November 1968 cartoon titled ‘International observers HQ, Lagos’ as an example of this sense of global conspiracy.⁸⁸ The cartoon depicts the international observer team sponsored by the British government to visit Nigeria and ascertain whether or not there was genocide, amid intense globalised mediatisation of the war. Doron notes that the cartoon criticised the observer team as collaborating with the FMG.⁸⁹ Heerten and Moses offer us the historical background of this visit:

⁸⁶ Doron, p. 232.

⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 232-34.

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 234.

⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 234.

This genocide claim provoked an international debate about the humanitarian crisis unfolding in Nigeria. It also placed immense pressure on the British government, whose support for the FMG attracted accusations of neo-colonialism by Biafran proponents. Public opinion there was firmly on the Biafran side; government rhetoric about Nigerian unity and its long-standing military relationship was no match for images of starving babies, the widespread circulation of which was part of the Biafran public relations campaign. [...] The British ultimately won the propaganda war by sponsoring an international observer team to visit Nigeria and report on the genocide issue. The FMG played along, although it forbade the team entry to Biafran territory where the famine and aerial bombing of eastern Nigerians were actually occurring. The term determined that genocide was not taking place, and international public opinion largely concurred.⁹⁰

In her novel, Adichie reconstructs this visit, but re-imagines the observer team and western media as embodied in two American photojournalists (p. 368). They are taken for a tour around Biafran refugee camps filled with starving children by Richard, in his new role as the secessionist state's media representative (p. 368). In this scene, there are hints of a global conspiracy against Biafra that Adichie kinaesthetically represents through the photojournalists' interactions with the children. This can be seen from how one of the photojournalists, upon being shown the emaciated children roasting rats for food, demands to see 'the real Biafrans' instead, leading Richard to reflect:

Richard knew his type. He was like President Nixon's fact finders from Washington or Prime Minister Wilson's commission members from London who arrived with their firm protein tablets and their firmer conclusions: that Nigeria was not bombing civilians, that the starvation was overflogged, that all was as well as it should be in the war. (p. 371)

The other photojournalist, although more sympathetic, is also shown to have a skewed perspective of the crisis, as he takes photographs of the children for the 'gloss-filled pages' of western magazines when they smile and beg for more of the sweets he offers them, but ignores them when they go back to roasting rats (pp. 370-75). Glossed over by photographic film and magazine pages, the yellowing skins of Biafran babies undergo a kind of 'treatment' that packages their bodies for the consumption of a mediatised world.

⁹⁰ Heerten and Moses, p. 185.

But Adichie closes this scene with a poem titled ‘Were You Silent When We Died?’ (p. 375), which forms the epilogue of Ugwu’s book. In doing so, she begins to indicate how his book reconstructs the image that the world has of Biafrans, drawing attention to its mediality through the skin. In the first instance, Ugwu’s poem title, which revises Madu’s declaration into a question, echoes this sense of global conspiracy that Madu first hinted in his conversation with Richard. Indeed, it is during this visit, after being discomforted by the photojournalists’ attitudes to the children, that Richard first thinks of the title of the book (p. 374). Since Ugwu’s book is written from his own experiences as a Biafran boy-soldier, however, this sense of global conspiracy comes across differently from that as conveyed and mediated through Richard’s op-eds and highly visible white skin. For Ugwu—a Biafran child himself—writes his book and his poem as if by someone who has died in the war and has come back to tell his story, that is, as a member of the ‘we’ who died while the world stayed silent.

Adichie conveys this writing process kinaesthetically, through the skin. In the novel, we see that Ugwu is reported dead to Olanna and Odenigbo at one point, after he is caught in an explosion (p. 381). But he is later found alive and sent home to heal from his injuries, where he starts to write his book and first hears the title ‘The World Was Silent When We Died’ from Richard (p. 396). Writing ‘on sides of old newspapers, on some paper Kainene had done supply calculations on, on the back of an old calendar’ (p. 397)—materials of a war archive in their own way—these paper scraps that make up the pages of Ugwu’s book are tangible reminders of his own disconcerting experience of being extremely close to death at the war front, where his skin was always close to decay:

after each operation, everything became new. Ugwu looked at his daily wrap of *garri* in wonder. He read pages of his book over and over. He touched his own skin and thought of its decay.

(p. 366)

These faded, un-glossed paper scraps also belie Ugwu's own attempts to authentically capture the suffering of the besieged Biafrans that he saw around him:

[He] realized that he would never be able to capture that child on paper, never be able to describe well enough the fear that dulled the eyes of mothers in the refugee camp when the bomber planes charged out of the sky. He would never be able to depict the very bleakness of bombing hungry people. But he tried, and the more he wrote, the less he dreamed.
(p. 398)

Ugwu's attempts to render the starving Biafrans around him on paper recognises its limits of representation, unlike the media practices of the photojournalists who photograph the Biafran babies for global consumption. We sense him trying to reconstruct 'that child on paper' through his book—the writing of which also exemplifies a kind of everyday media practice. Ugwu's writing is an embodied practice that involves bodily modification, for as he writes his book, his body becomes reconstructed as we see his injured skin growing back and healing: 'It surprised him that it was possible for his body to return to what it had been and for his mind to function with permanent lucidity.' (p. 397)

Correspondingly, Ugwu's poem reconstructs these photographs of Biafran babies, through which he suggests a sense of global conspiracy. But he reconstructs these images as if from a contemporary archive, hinting at Adichie's own process of reconstructing the Nigeria-Biafra war from a plethora of information about the event. I have cited the full poem here for easy reference:

'WERE YOU SILENT WHEN WE DIED?'

Did you see photos in sixty-eight
Of children with their hair becoming rust:
Sickly patches nestled on those small heads,
Then falling out, like rotten leaves on dust?

Imagine children with arms like toothpicks,
With footballs for bellies and skin stretched thin.
It was kwashiorkor—a difficult word,
A word that was not quite ugly enough, a sin.

You needn't imagine. There were photos
Displayed in gloss-filled pages of your *Life*.
Did you see? Did you feel sorry briefly,
Then turn around to hold your lover or wife?

Their skin had turned the tawny of weak tea
And showed cobwebs of vein and brittle bone;
Naked children laughing, as if the man
Would not take photos and then leave, alone.

(p. 375)

The poem's first line, in its address to an imaginary viewer, renders these photographs as already part of an archive: 'Did you see the photos of sixty-eight?' From the last stanza, we also get a sense that these children with their skin having 'turned the tawny of weak tea' in the yellowing photographs have already died, being left alone after their images are captured and circulated for global media consumption. Yet their laughing suggests a kind of agency, implying they have alternative stories to tell of their own war experiences, beyond the glossy treatment of media. This echoes Ugwu's own return from death, to communicate his alternative 'war report' through his book.

But Ugwu and these Biafran babies are up against a mediatised world that 'treats' their bodies for mass consumption in certain ways, thus silencing them. As mentioned earlier, they are photographed and 'Displayed in gloss-filled pages of your *Life*'. Adichie draws links of familiarity between the highly visible photographs of starving Biafran children printed in the glossy pages of *Life* magazine (the influential American photojournalist magazine that 'launched an entirely new kind of journalism'⁹¹) and the photographs people would take as part of their everyday media practices. Yet Ugwu's depiction of western audience turning away from the material deaths of these children conveys a sense of global conspiracy as enacted through these everyday media practices in the globalised mediatisation of war—practices which, to recall Adichie's frustration with contemporary media coverage of Africa, continue to perpetuate African stereotypes today.

CHARRED BROWN BITS

Ugwu counters such mediatised 'treatment' of African bodies by presenting the face of another Biafran baby in his book prologue. This is the face of a little girl whose decapitated head was concealed in a calabash by her mother,

⁹¹ 'The 75 years of pioneering photojournalism at *Life* magazine', *BBC*, 15 December 2011 <<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/av/magazine-16192563/the-75-years-of-pioneering-photojournalism-at-life-magazine>> [accessed 5 August 2017] (para. 1 of 4).

as they fled to the East after violence against Igbo people in the North, which would mark the start of the Nigeria-Biafra war (p. 82). Ugwu learns of this incident from Olanna, who encountered this woman and her calabash on the train back to the East (p. 149). Ugwu depicts this little girl's face with its 'scruffy plaits falling across the dark-brown face, eyes completely white, eerily open, a mouth in a surprised O' (p. 82).

However, Ugwu's description of the little girl's 'dark-brown' skin differs from Olanna's description of the 'odd skin tone' of this dead face: 'a flat, sallow grey, like a poorly wiped blackboard' (p. 156). This difference might seem minimal, but it significantly enables Ugwu to recontextualise the little girl's death within the narrative of genocide. In his prologue, he positions this incident alongside other examples of war violence:

After he writes this, he mentions the German women who fled Hamburg with the charred bodies of their children stuffed in suitcases, the Rwandan women who pocketed tiny parts of their mauled babies. But he is careful not to draw parallels.

(p. 82)

As Ugwu 'treats' and modifies the little girl's dark brown skin tone to draw comparisons to other charred baby bodies of war, this resonates with his experience of being almost blown up, his body parts nearly becoming 'charred, like bits of wood' (p. 354). As shown earlier, Ugwu is kinaesthetically aware of how close he was to this fate, as he touches his skin at the war front and thinks of its decay. In fact, the difficulty of identifying blown-up bodies led Ugwu to be initially misreported as dead (p. 381).

In this light, Ugwu's 'treatment' of the little girl's skin from grey to brown for the reconstructed narrative of genocide exemplifies his way of trying to make sense of this meaningless death—how the girl's life has been prematurely 'wiped out'—as well as those of other Biafrans during the war. Adichie's emphasis on Ugwu's carefulness 'not to draw parallels' also shows attentiveness to the mediality of the images of dead Biafran children in relation to genocide, particularly as the same narrative also played into the globalised mediatization of the war:

After the publication of images of starving Biafran children in the western media, analogies and comparisons with the Holocaust abounded internationally. [...] To a large degree, the connection between the humanitarian crisis in Biafra and the Holocaust was made on a visual level, at least in the eyes of western observers.⁹²

As mentioned earlier, the narrative of genocide was a critical part of Biafran propaganda warfare. But via Ugwu, Adichie suggests the notion of genocide is more valuable in terms how it can help him accurately ‘capture that child on paper’ as an alternative construction of the mediated image of Biafran babies, rather than as a definitive claim or propaganda material that the international observer team and public opinion were eager to debunk. That is to say, genocide is closer to Ugwu’s own lived experience on the ground, and his writing of his book—wherein he modifies and ‘treats’ the skins of these Biafran babies even as this act of writing reconstructs and heals his skin in real time—exemplifies an embodied practice that intimately relates to the lived experience of genocide. Ugwu’s act of writing his book, then, is his resistance practice of weaponising media to represent his own particular, lived experience of the war, resisting globalised, universal ‘glossy’ media representations of African people and their war experiences. In this sense, Ugwu’s embodied writing practice is a ‘motor decision’ with motor intentionality that challenges cultural meanings. Adichie’s presentation of skin here as a fleshy interface that mediates between Ugwu’s embodied local war experience and global portrayals of this experience is also attentive to bodily kinaesthesia. Simultaneously, we again get the sense of Ugwu’s book as being reflexively aware of a contemporary archive.

OILING

In this section, we will consider the effects of Ugwu’s resistance practice. Recalling that Ugwu is a Biafran child himself, Madelaine Hron posits that the child or youth protagonist is an apt vehicle for the third-generation of Nigerian authors like Adichie—themselves children of ‘the children of the postcolony’—to convey their perspective on Nigerian culture, in the context of

⁹² Heerten and Moses, p. 179.

multiculturalism, globalization, and even international human rights, to Western readers.⁹⁴ Hron observes:

Notably, it was the war in Biafra that first introduced the world with the mediatized image of starving children with bloated stomachs, suffering of kwashiorkor. While mass media has since deployed this image innumerable times to exemplify famine or pestilence, it often facily dismisses its deeper relations to war or genocide. In [...] *Half of a Yellow Sun* [...] Chimamanda Adichie [...] return[s] to the horrors of Biafra, a trope previously explored by various Nigerian authors, from a fresh twenty-first century perspective, drawing out such human rights issues such as genocide, media censorship, refugees, or humanitarian assistance.⁹⁵

Hron considers the child protagonist as enabling Adichie and other third-generation Nigerian writers to raise these issues of increasing global concern and to examine more compellingly the role of young Nigerians, if not of the future of the young Nigerian nation.⁹⁶

We have seen that Ugwu's narrative of genocide enables Adichie to recontextualise the war deaths of Biafran children within the global arena—the 'we' who died while the world stayed silent now refers not just to Biafran children, but also to other children in the world who died from genocide. But as I have contended thus far, it is not enough to consider the image content of the genocide narrative, but also its mediality. Indeed, Adichie's description of the little girl's ashy-grey skin tone as 'a poorly wiped blackboard' and Ugwu's subsequent treatment of it into a dark-brown colour are kinaesthetic representations of this mediality, wherein the skin is a fleshy interface between body and world.

Ugwu's treatment of the little girl's skin tone, then—as if touching his own regrowing skin—redirects attention to the child's disappearance. That this little girl is secreted away in her mother's calabash refers to similar cases of bodies that have disappeared during the war and unaccounted for. An example is the unborn child of Olanna's pregnant cousin who is also killed in the Igbo massacres, whom Ugwu writes about (p. 398). Ugwu himself was misreported

⁹⁴ Madelaine Hron, "'Ora Na-Azu Nwa': The Figure of the Child in Third-Generation Nigerian Novels", *Research in African Literatures*, 39.2 (2008), 27-48 (p. 28).

⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 44.

⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 45.

dead. A more glaring example is Kainene's disappearance from trading behind enemy lines just before the war ends (p. 412).

These disappearances are important to consider because they are unaccounted for; they do not fit official records of Biafran casualties. Regarding the Nigeria-Biafra war, the number of casualties was a contentious issue, with estimates varying from half a million to three million dead, with most of the casualties on the Biafran side being civilians.⁹⁷ It is the uncertainty of this information that underpins the debate about whether the war was a genocidal campaign by the Nigerians or a civil war—the former notion being integral to the war's globalised mediatisation. Adichie addresses this through a final, post-war conversation between Madu and Richard, when they discuss Kainene's disappearance.

In this scene, Madu expresses disbelief at the reported number of casualties in foreign press: 'The foreigners say that one million died [...] That can't be.' (p. 429) Richard is reluctant to debate this:

He was not sure he wanted to have one of those conversations so many Biafrans had now, passing kernels of blame to others, oiling their own faces with a valour they never had.

(p. 429)

That Adichie represents Madu's denial of casualty numbers as a kind of skin 'treatment'—'oiling their own faces with a valour they never had'—recalls Madu's earlier 'bleaching' of the mediatised 'face' of Biafra to express this valour to the world. But Richard's weariness signals his own disillusionment with the war's globalised mediatisation, for Madu's 'oiling' of his skin also covers up his lack of information about Kainene: 'I don't understand how we have found out nothing about Kainene, I don't understand it at all.' (p. 429) Indeed, Richard has stopped reading newspapers by this point because he cannot bear to see the media photograph of Kainene placed, advertising for her return (p. 429).

But Madu's skin 'oiling' is also reminiscent of Ugwu's 'treatment' of the little girl's skin tone. Just as Ugwu recontextualises this little girl's death within genocide to make sense of Biafran suffering, it is implied that Madu's disbelief is

⁹⁷ Doron, p. 243.

due to his own lack of information—as an ‘experienced insider’ himself—about Kainene. Considering his media tactics to represent a certain version of the war to the world, Madu’s distrust of the media is unsurprising: ‘What does the press know, really?’ (p. 136) Madu is not accurate about everything happening on the ground—he had been wrong about major war events twice, while Richard had predicted them correctly (p. 137, p. 307)—but Adichie suggests this to be Madu’s way of getting a grasp on Biafran suffering through a Biafran perspective, like Ugwu does: ‘I wanted to make a strongly-felt political point about who should be writing the stories of Africa.’⁹⁸

It is Madu’s act of reclaiming Biafran control over how the war is represented that makes Richard uncomfortable with his lament, ‘I don’t understand how we have found out nothing about Kainene, I don’t understand it at all.’ ‘Richard did not like the sound of *we*, did not know who Madu included in it’ (p. 429)—a reminder of the title ‘The World Was Silent When We Died’. But in presenting Madu’s skin ‘oiling’, Adichie signals the mediality of Ugwu’s reconstructed image of the disappeared Biafran girl—Kainene being one such girl—and how it supports genocide as more accurate of local lived experience of the war. Indeed, we see Olanna scanning the face of every female body in a morgue and reading her own baby girl’s face for ‘clairvoyance, a sign that Baby knew Kainene was coming back’ (pp. 411-15). Adichie shows how it is the uncertainty and open-endedness of information regarding Biafran casualties—especially with unaccounted-for disappearances of people like Kainene and the little girl—that enables alternative historical reconstructions like Ugwu’s book to be written and to be potentially weaponised in the global media ecology. Ultimately, she suggests that such reconstructions of the Nigeria-Biafra war—told through the ‘faces’ of those whose deaths or disappearances do not fit its globalised mediatisation and are thus marginalised—resist African stereotypes that continue being perpetuated in mass media today.

⁹⁸ Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie, ‘The Stories of Africa: a Q & A with Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie’, pp. 2-6 (p. 6).

JAPAN AS NUMBER ONE

While *Half of a Yellow Sun* ends with a character's disappearance, Murakami's novel *The Wind-Up Bird Chronicle* begins and is structured around the disappearances of two characters from past and present. Set in post-war Japan in the mid-eighties, *The Wind-Up Bird Chronicle* revolves around the strange events that its protagonist and ex-salaryman, Toru Okada, becomes embroiled in as he tries to find his vanished and estranged wife, Kumiko. Kumiko's disappearance echoes that of a Japanese spy, Yamamoto, eliminated during the Asia-Pacific War. This is a connection that Murakami makes in terms of bodily kinaesthesia, particularly that of skin.

In a key scene, Yamamoto is skinned to make him reveal the whereabouts of a secret document suggested to affect the outcome of WWII; that he dies—his body disintegrating when shorn of its skin—without confessing to this information, but that this incident is suppressed, suggests this sacrifice to be questionable. Similarly, when Kumiko communicates with Toru through a computer after her disappearance, she tells him: 'I want you to think about me this way if you can: that I am slowly dying of an incurable disease—one that causes my face and body to disintegrate little by little.' (pp. 488-89) Murakami, then, begins to link skin with media representations of war in contemporary Japan.

The Japan of *The Wind-Up Bird Chronicle* is set in the middle of a 'decade when the consumer culture seemed to obliterate everything but the pursuit of wealth'⁹⁹. Rebuilding itself after its WWII defeat, Japan became an economic superpower by the late seventies.¹⁰⁰ Anne Allison connects Japanese wartime nationalism and its post-war economic development in relation to its population's activity:

[Japan's] national lens radically changed from the militarism of empire building to the industrialism of domestic security. Citizens were now told to work hard—not to win a war but to increase prosperity at home. By toiling diligently at school, at home, and at jobs, Japanese subjects

⁹⁹ Jay Rubin, 'Murakami Haruki and the War Inside', in *Imag(in)ing the War in Japan: Representing and Responding to Trauma in Postwar Literature and Film*, ed. by David Stahl and Mark Williams (Leiden: Brill, 2010), pp. 53-74 (p. 61).

¹⁰⁰ Anne Allison, 'A Sociality of, and beyond, "My-home" in Post-corporate Japan', *Cambridge Anthropology*, 30.1 (2012), 95-108 (p. 95).

worked at once for the nation and for themselves. The country prospered and, with what was called its ‘miracle economy’, Japan gained the global prestige that had eluded it as a would-be imperial power. Meanwhile, the population enjoyed stable employment and the rise of consumer culture. Indeed, by the late 1980s, 90 per cent of Japanese identified as middle class.¹⁰¹

Murakami’s novel similarly suggests that the ethos underlying Japanese wartime nationalism and its post-war economic development remains the same, as the country is driven to construct the global image of ‘Japan as Number One’ that its miracle economy (or bubble economy) has won accolades for and that has been good for national growth.¹⁰²

Murakami presents Japan’s institutional efforts towards building and bringing this image forward into the nineties and beyond as a kind of mediatised war that is spearheaded by Noburu Wataya, Kumiko’s elder brother and an up-and-coming academic economist-turned-political contender tipped to be Japan’s future leader (p. 494). Noburu is implied as descending from this wartime nationalist lineage, for as he inherits his uncle’s political constituency, he also upholds the legacy of his uncle’s beliefs. These beliefs stem from Noburu’s uncle’s acquaintance with and admiration of actual historical figure Kanji Ishiwara, a Japanese army general known for his nationalism (p. 496). Ishiwara was key in setting up the puppet state of Manchukuo in 1931 towards making ‘a new model Asian nation’, using it to serve as a logistical base for war against the Soviet Union and eventually the U.S. and England (p. 496).

In the novel, Noburu never expresses any overt political message. But as we will see, by kinaesthetically representing the ‘treatment’ that Noburu’s facial skin undergoes as he becomes more visible in mass media with his growing political power, Murakami emphasises the mediality of this neo-nationalist image of ‘Japan as Number One’ as it is consumed and recontextualised by the modern-day public through everyday media practices. Simultaneously, it is through Noburu that Murakami begins to hint at the violence underlying the conduct of this contemporary mediatised warfare:

¹⁰¹ Allison, p. 95.

¹⁰² *Ibid.*, p. 103.

We did away the pre-war emperor system and put the Peace Constitution in its place. And as a result we have, to be sure, come to live in an efficient, rational world based on the ideology of a modern civil society, and that efficiency has brought about an almost overwhelming prosperity in our society. Yet, I (and perhaps many others) can't seem to escape the suspicion that even now, in many areas of society, we are being peacefully and quietly obliterated as nameless articles of consumption. We go on believing that we live in the so-called free 'civil state' we call 'Japan' with our fundamental human rights guaranteed, but is this truly the case? Peel back a layer of skin, and what do we find breathing and pulsating there but the same old sealed national system or ideology.¹⁰³

Murakami considers this 'same old sealed national system or ideology' lying underneath the modern, affluent Japanese citizen's skin to be the dark side of Japanese consumerism and of the global image of 'Japan as Number One'. As *The Wind-Up Bird Chronicle* was also first published a few years after the bursting of the bubble economy in 1991—the nineties would become known as the 'lost decade' that saw an entire generation of youth come of age with few or no prospects of viable employment¹⁰⁴—Murakami's act of redirecting our attention to what lies underneath the skin of modern affluence suggests a form of resistance.

A NEW MASK

Like Adichie, Murakami keeps the sense of contemporary Japanese society's engagement in a kind of globalised mediatised war for its post-war economic development in the novel's background. This is reflected in how Noburu's growing political influence and public popularity—signalled through his increasing presence in mass media—occurs in the backdrop of Toru's journey to find his wife. Reading newspapers and magazines, Toru finds Noburu's face consistently plastered in them and broadcasted on television, as the latter made 'constant public pronouncements as a magazine columnist and a commentator on TV' as part of an ambitious programme of political activity (p. 494). In person, Toru observes that Noburu's own skin has transformed:

¹⁰³ Haruki Murakami, 'Kusahara no naka no, tetsu no hakaba' (The Iron Graveyard in the Middle of the Meadow), *Marco Polo*, October 1994, p. 63. Cited in Rubin, p. 70.

¹⁰⁴ Allison, p. 96.

That almost stagnant, muddy look of his had been pushed into the background, to be covered over by something slick and artificial. Noburu Wataya had managed to find for himself a new, more sophisticated mask – a very well-made mask, to be sure: perhaps even a new skin. Whatever it was, mask or skin, I had to admit [...] that it had a certain kind of attractive power. And then it hit me: looking at this face was like looking at a television image. He talked the way people on television talked, and he moved the way people on television moved. There was always a layer of glass between us. I was on this side, and he was on that side.

(p. 197)

We see that Noburu's face has been 'treated' or 'doctored' for television to capture the public's attention. His growing of a new skin—a fleshy interface—for his role 'as an activist intellectual, a new type of intelligent politician that had not been seen before' (p. 494) kinaesthetically represents the lived experience of the mediatization of post-war Japanese society, in its drive to project the global image of 'Japan as Number One' via its miracle economy. Indeed, Noburu's most devoted supporters belong to this mediated society, described as 'Those people [who] are always glued to the television set' (p. 572). Simultaneously, Murakami implies this mediatization of post-war Japanese society as indicating the emergence of a neo-nationalist form of warfare: 'I was on this side, and he was on that side.'

To understand the characteristics of this warfare, we also need to consider thirty-year-old Toru's societal position. Having recently quit his job at a law firm and gaining new satisfaction from being unemployed, Toru is conscious of occupying a marginal position in a society that has long celebrated the salaryman who appeared in the seventies as 'an icon of the post-war era, the "company warrior" [who] toiled long hours at a white-collared job in order to rebuild the nation from its war torn rubble'¹⁰⁵. The Japanese salaryman is integral to '*mai homu shūgi*' (my-homeism), the envisioned 'dream home' that Japanese middle class of the seventies strived towards as they worked—no longer for the emperor, but for themselves—in the new 'enterprise society' (*kigyō shakai*).¹⁰⁷

This dream home—a home ideally located in a residential neighbourhood, stocked with the newest domestic electronics (washing

¹⁰⁵ Cindi SturtzSreetharan, 'Resignifying the Japanese father: Mediatization, commodification, and dialect', *Language & Communication*, 53 (2017), 45-58 (pp. 45-46).

¹⁰⁷ Allison, pp. 95-96.

machines, air conditioners, colour televisions, automobiles)—encapsulated the Japanese dream of post-war prosperity, corporate capitalism, and nuclear family making.¹⁰⁸ The consumer capitalism of post-war Japan is intertwined with its burgeoning mediatisation:

Consumers in the 1950s had been goaded into purchasing washing machines, in the 1960s color televisions, and in the 1970s larger automobiles. In the 1980s it was computers, video games, VCRs, and home entertainment systems.¹⁰⁹

Indeed, in the novel, we are told of Toru's acquaintance Mr Honda, a war veteran-turned-fortune teller who owns a 'huge colour television set' tuned to the government-supported NHK network 24/7 (p. 51). In another scene, Noburu's supporters (whose attires suggest their belonging to the salaryman middle class) are mesmerised by NHK news broadcasts and Noburu's face that appears on the television screen: 'The men all wore suits or sports coats and conservative ties and leather shoes. [...] all the people in the group appeared to be strangers whose attention just happened to be locked on the same television screen.' (p. 566) These examples recall the 'CNN effect' arising from the network's 'rolling 24-hour news coverage'.¹¹⁰ The 'pleasure, style and commodity of what has been labelled television's "televisuality"' are significant factors in the mediatisation of warfare of this period, which the 'treatment' that Noburu's facial skin undergoes has exemplified.¹¹¹

My-homeism did not only exemplify a site for consumption, but was also centred on a social and productive unit.¹¹² The my-homeism concept was the grounding of the post-war nation-state: corporate capitalism that, nestling the family within, produced and reproduced through the gendered labours of a heteronormative family.¹¹³ Correspondingly, the 'family corporate system' drove productivity in Japan.¹¹⁴ Hardworking men—the previously mentioned 'company warriors'—earned a family wage to support wife and kids at home,

¹⁰⁸ Allison, p. 96.

¹⁰⁹ Matthew C. Strecher, 'Magic Realism and the Search for Identity in the Fiction of Murakami', *The Journal of Japanese Studies*, 25.2 (1999), 263-98 (p. 266).

¹¹⁰ Hoskins and O'Loughlin, p. 16.

¹¹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 16.

¹¹² Allison, p. 96.

¹¹³ *Ibid.*, p. 96.

¹¹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 96.

and the unpaid labours of mothers/wives freed men to devote their energies to work while driving children to perform industriously at school.¹¹⁵ Companies also ran like a ‘family’; *sararīman* (salarymen) did not work at Toyota, they belonged to Toyota.¹¹⁶ The globally mediated image of the post-war heteronormative family, particularly that of the post-war mother, was also influential in shaping my-homeism:

Unlike their mothers who had assumed more passive roles in the prewar family, postwar mothers were expected to be the creators of comfort at home, nurturing their family with love, care, and nourishing food. Since there were limited role models for this in urban Japan, fictive models in American sitcoms, Japanese home dramas on television, weekly women’s magazines, and the flood of advertising became influential. The new family was supposed to be bright, sweet, and happy, like those fictive models. Mass aspiration for the middle-class new family was to erase class disparity, and realize the Japanese dream. Additionally, the idealization of home tended by the full time housewife that served as a refuge from the working world for men also helped to legitimate the excessive workload of that world.¹¹⁷

This family-corporate system, then, fuelled Japan’s miracle economy as its ‘hidden weapon’ and developed its globally mediated image of ‘Japan as Number One’.¹¹⁸ As a product of this system, brought up by parents who pushed him ‘to pour all his energies into maintaining his position as number one’ (p. 73), Noburu’s ‘treated’ facial skin exemplifies this mediated image. Yet this nestling of home within the capital, mediated relations of Japan, Inc. engendered its own problems, which is hinted earlier through Toru’s sense of being pitted against Noburu.¹¹⁹

CHAMELEON

The capitalisation (and thus mediation) of the affective relations of home life meant that the home became a breeding ground for hyperproductivity

¹¹⁵ Allison, p. 96.

¹¹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 96.

¹¹⁷ Akiko Hashimoto and John W. Traphagan, ‘Changing Japanese Families’, in *Imagined Families, Lived Families: Culture and Kinship in Contemporary Japan*, ed. by Akiko Hashimoto and John W. Traphagan (New York: State University of New York Press, 2008), pp. 1-12 (p. 8).

¹¹⁸ Beverly J. Silver, *Forces of Labor: Workers’ Movements and Globalization Since 1870* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003). Cited in Allison, p. 96.

¹¹⁹ Allison, p. 104.

in workaholic husbands, competitive students, and sacrificial mothers.¹²⁰ This competitiveness is exemplified in Noburu's father, a government official 'who was convinced that the only way to live a full life in Japanese society was to earn the highest possible marks and to shove aside anyone and everyone standing in your path to the top' (pp. 72-73). Noburu's father's competitiveness echoes Japanese wartime aggression and Japanese superiority:

All men are *not* created equal [...] Japan might have the political structure of a democratic nation, but it was at the same time a fiercely carnivorous class society in which the weak were devoured by the strong, and unless you became one of the elite, there was no point in living in this country. You'd just be ground to dust. You had to fight your way up every rung of the ladder. This kind of ambition was entirely healthy. If people lost that ambition, Japan would perish.

(p. 73)

Noburu is shown to be emulating his father's competitiveness from his tactics during televised debates.

Noburu's tactics are kinaesthetically represented as intellectual sparring: 'it was like boxing with a ghost: your punches just swished through the air. There was nothing solid for them to connect with.' (p. 76) Like how his facial skin is 'treated' for television, Toru describes Noburu as an 'intellectual chameleon': 'changing his colour in accordance with his opponent's, ad-libbing his logic for maximum effectiveness, mobilizing all the rhetoric at his command' (p. 76). This skin 'treatment' highlights the mediality of Noburu's image rather than its content, for his words are inconsistent and meaningless. Just as he manipulates his new skin for mass media, Noburu manipulates economic statistics in 'ingenious—even artistic—intellectual permutations' to misdirect the mediated masses:

If you paid close attention to what he was saying or what he had written, you knew that his words lacked consistency. [...] Consistency and an established world-view were excess baggage in the intellectual mobile warfare that flared up in the mass media's tiny time segments, and it was [Noburu's] great advantage to be free of such things.

(pp. 75-76)

¹²⁰ Allison, p. 104.

Yet Noburu's tactics of misdirection captivates mediatised masses and whets their appetite for political entertainment:

All they looked for on the tube were the bouts of intellectual gladiators; the redder the blood they drew, the better. It didn't matter if the same person said one thing on Monday and the opposite on Thursday.

(p. 76)

The mediatisation of post-war Japanese society, then, belies a form of neo-nationalist warfare that is driven by the same wartime aggression and competitiveness, but that is now packaged differently in the contemporary era.

Murakami suggests this competitiveness exacerbates the marginalisation of certain groups of people in contemporary Japanese society, giving rise to an internal war of sorts. These are people like Toru, whose unemployment and lack of direction in life are seen as weakness by the 'strong' elite like Noburu (p. 199). Murakami puts forward Toru as representing the generation of the 'lost decade' or the 'glacial age of hiring' in post-bubble times—a sign of things to come if this competitiveness continued—but also as a burgeoning figure of resistance against the mediatised elite.¹²¹

The generation of the 'lost decade' were the children of baby-boomers who had grown up under the Japan, Inc. model of hard work at school, geared towards the adult roles of stable middle-class life, but who were now left adrift after the 1991 burst of the bubble economy without the promise and security of the family-corporate system.¹²² While a shift to more immaterial, flexible labour had already begun in the eighties, aggravated by the bursting of the bubble economy, the increasing delinking of the nestling of family and corporation became promoted under the rubric of a 'new era of Japanese-style management' (*shinjidai no nihonteki keiei*).¹²⁴ Accordingly, the government promoted the detached, flexibly adaptable and privatised individual—a deterritorialised, decentred, postmodern subject who was more productive of and for capitalism.¹²⁵ Toru, who quits his job at a father-and-son law firm because 'If I stayed with the

¹²¹ Allison, p. 99.

¹²² *Ibid.*, p. 99.

¹²⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 99.

¹²⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 99.

firm any longer, I'd be there for the rest of my life' and who faces the prospect of being supported by his wife, is such an example (p. 9).

But what started out as a lifestyle option in 1989 became more of an economic fiat for young workers in the post-bubble times, as these workers found themselves falling into the trend of *freeta*—working freely, with no set duration or contract, in *arubeito* or part-time jobs—which made them increasingly disposable as a worker, and as a human being.¹²⁶ This generation of young 'precariat'—a continuing phenomenon in the twenty-first century—forms an underclass of what is becoming a two-class, bipolarised, downturned society:

Japan has moved from a society of an expansive middle class to one of class difference. What was once achievable by the majority of citizens—the my-homeism of a steady job, a family at home, and kids anticipating the same for their own futures—now divides the nation into 'winners' and 'losers'.¹²⁸

This division between 'winners' and 'losers' underlies Toru's earlier feeling from gazing at Noburu's new skin as if through a television screen's glass layer, where Noburu becomes Toru's nemesis: 'I was on this side, and he was on that side.' This division also underlies the internal war brewing in contemporary mediatised Japanese society, between the 'winners' with their 'smooth, made-for-TV mask' (p. 203) like Noburu, and the 'losers' like Toru—the 'stupid people' with 'nothing in their heads but garbage and rocks' and who 'want to lose all sense of direction' (p. 242).

The Wind-Up Bird Chronicle, then, is poised on the brink of this internal war—a contemporary manifestation of Japanese wartime aggression. Kumiko's disappearance marks the beginning of the end, as Noburu uses her disappearance to detach her and the Wataya family from a 'loser' like Toru via divorce (p. 198). Noburu's matter-of-fact account of divorce proceedings echoes the formalities of wartime surrender:

Fortunately, there are no children involved, and in view of the circumstances, no money need to change hands. Everything can be settled quickly. She simply pulls out of your family register. You just have to sign and put your seal on forms prepared by a lawyer, and that takes care

¹²⁶ Allison, p. 99.

¹²⁸ Masahiro Yamada, *Kibō kakusa shakai: 'makegumi' no zetsubōkanga nihono Hikisaku* (Tokyo: Chikuma Shobō, 2003). Cited in Allison, p. 100.

of that. And let me add this to avoid misunderstanding: what I am saying now is the final view of the entire Wataya family.

(p. 198)

Murakami also hints at Toru's own wartime associations—his full name 'sounded kind of like some pre-war foreign minister' (p. 62). But Noburu's detailing of these procedures is again a tactic of misdirection—a way of preserving the 'face' of the Wataya family (p. 198). Toru questions Noburu's explanation for Kumiko's disappearance and the real purpose of their meeting: 'what is the ultimate purpose of this gathering? [...] To get me to agree to divorce Kumiko? Or is there some deeper objective? There did seem to be a kind of logic to what you said earlier, but all the important parts are vague.' (p. 201) Noburu's explanation as having 'a kind of logic [...] but all the important parts are vague' renders the content of his words meaningless—his message manipulated just to preserve 'face'.

Indeed, their meeting is set up like one of Noboru's televised debates—it is here that Toru gets the sensation of seeing Noburu's new skin as if through a glass television screen—and Murakami suggests that both men are battling it out like 'intellectual gladiators' over Kumiko (p. 197). But Toru fights back by showing another side or 'face' of himself, telling Noburu:

To you, with your values, I may well be nothing but garbage and rocks. But I'm not as stupid as you think I am. I know exactly what you've got under that smooth, made-for-TV mask of yours. I know your secret. Kumiko knows and I know: we both know what's under there. If I wanted to, I could tell it to the world. [...] I may be a nobody, but at least I'm not a sandbag. I'm a living, breathing human being. If somebody hits me, I hit back.

(p. 203)

This is a strategic move, as Toru notes: 'What I had said to him was almost pure bluff.' (p. 203) Yet we see that Toru's resistance practice of showing another 'face' of himself involves the modification of his bodily behaviour, which Murakami kinaesthetically presents through the skin as a fleshy interface.

Toru's resistance practice enacts a motor decision with motor intentionality that dynamically engages the body and invites subjects to effect change, for the effect of this practice is such that it enables Toru to puncture Noburu's composure. This is kinaesthetically represented in how the latter's

‘treated’ facial skin turns strangely red: ‘Certain patches turned a deep red, while others reddened only slightly and blotchy, and the rest appeared to have become weirdly pale.’ (p. 203) Recalling Noburu as an ‘intellectual chameleon’, it is as if his new skin is not quite able to complete its camouflage—even the sunglasses that he goes on to wear fails to hide his transformation: ‘The strange, blotchy colours still covered his face. They looked almost permanent now.’ (p. 203) This gradual revealing of Noburu’s ‘true colours’ on his skin begins to suggest that a form of resistance against these ‘winners’ who represent the mediatised, neo-nationalist image of ‘Japan as Number One’ is underway.

PROSTHETIC SHELL

From Toru’s strategy, Murakami suggests that the way to resist the neo-nationalist image of ‘Japan as Number One’ that continues to captivate the mediatised masses is to offer an alternative image of Japanese wartime aggression. This alternative image enables representations of Japanese wartime aggression to be reconstructed from the vantage point of the ‘losers’, not the ‘winners’. For Murakami, this would be the underreported historical event of the 1939 Battle of Nomonhan—a four-month undeclared war between the Japanese and the Soviet Union that remains peripheral to the official Japanese representation of the Asia-Pacific war because it was an embarrassing defeat for Japanese nationalists. Jay Rubin notes that the Battle of Nomonhan may have been Japan’s first experience of having its un-modern worldview and ‘warview’ trounced by a country that knew how to establish supply lines before going to war rather than simply hoping for the best.¹²⁹ Murakami considers the soldiers who died in this battle and in WWII as meaninglessly sacrificed by the top brass who were concerned with preserving the ‘face’ of Japanese military might.¹³⁰ ‘They were murdered’, he says, ‘used up like so many nameless articles of consumption—with terrible inefficiency within the hermetically sealed system we call Japan.’¹³¹ Murakami’s comparison of these dead soldiers to ‘nameless

¹²⁹ Rubin, p. 69.

¹³⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 69.

¹³¹ Murakami, ‘Kusahara no naka no, tetsu no hakaba’ (The Iron Graveyard in the Middle of the Meadow), p. 63. Cited in Rubin, p. 70.

articles of consumption' reinforces his novel's suggestion that the mediatisation of post-war Japanese society belies a form of neo-nationalist warfare driven by the same wartime aggression, but that is now packaged differently in the contemporary era. In the novel, we learn more about the military sacrifices of Nomonhan through one such soldier.

This soldier is Lieutenant Mamiya, Yamamoto's old comrade, who is struggling with the ghosts of his WWII military past. Mamiya enters Toru's life on the same day that Kumiko disappears, and unexpectedly tells him about Yamamoto's sacrifice through skinning (p. 126). Yamamoto's sacrifice occurs a year before Nomonhan, but Murakami suggests this incident as holding the key to understanding the battle and the deaths of the Japanese soldiers there (p. 136). For the events surrounding Yamamoto's sacrifice occur on the Manchukuo-Mongolia border along the Khalkha River—the same site where Nomonhan would later take place (p. 141).

As a soldier unable to sacrifice himself in war despite wanting to, due to a curse, Mamiya is one of the 'losers' of the war and of post-war Japanese society (p. 170). This is kinaesthetically represented in the loss of Mamiya's left hand from an act of failed and meaningless war sacrifice:

Determined to die, [...] I offered myself up as cannon fodder, attacking a Soviet tank with a land mine in my arms. As Mr Honda had prophesised on the banks of the Khalkha River, however, I was not able to die so easily. I lost only my hand, not my life. All the men under my command were, I believe, killed. We may have been acting under orders, but it was a stupid, suicidal attack.

(p. 538)

We see that Mamiya was also 'used up like so many nameless articles of consumption' by the military top brass. Mamiya additionally tells Toru that 'Something in me was already dead' and feels he should have died during the war (p. 170). Like Ugwu, Mamiya is a soldier who tells his story as a member of the living dead.

Through Toru's eyes, we see that Mamiya's skin has undergone a kind of 'treatment' to reflect this state of being. Mamiya's missing left hand has been reconstructed with a prosthetic hand that he covers with a glove, 'growing' a new, inorganic skin like Noburu: 'Encased in this grey glove, the artificial hand

looked especially cold and inorganic when compared with the tanned and hairy right hand' (p. 130). This juxtaposition of organic and inorganic skin conveys skin as a mediating layer between the 'used up' body and the world, and reinforces Mamiya's unhappy existence in post-war Japan as a 'walking shell' (p. 564) and as 'a dried-up carcass, the cast-off shell of an insect' (p. 167), doomed to 'live my life in total defeat' (p. 564).

Yet Mamiya's glove—his prosthetic skin—also kinaesthetically represents the covering up of information about another discarded skin, Yamamoto's. As Mamiya transmits his story to Toru, then—initially in person, but later through letters—Murakami suggests the possibility of reconstructing Japan's military history through the prosthetic skin of a 'loser', thus beginning to show how Mamiya's story can be potentially weaponised to resist practices underlying the global image of 'Japan as Number One' that violently forces modern Japanese citizens to all act as 'winners' with 'smooth, made-for-TV masks'. We will see how this plays out in the next section.

BLANK SKIN

As mentioned earlier, through Mamiya's eyes, we see that Yamamoto is flayed alive for not revealing the whereabouts of a confidential state document—a letter—that he has taken from the enemy, the Russians (p. 159). It is suggested that if the letter was found, there could be serious repercussions for global war, likely sparking off a full-scale war between the Soviet Union and Japan, which might then embolden Hitler to invade Poland or Czechoslovakia (p. 146). Murakami, then, suggests this incident as an alternative version of how WWII might have started. In this sense, Yamamoto partly succeeds in his mission, for even as he sacrifices his physical skin, this letter and its secrets remain buried: 'It's probably still there, sleeping in the earth near the Khalkha River.' (p. 168) Yamamoto has fulfilled his role as a secret agent—a professional 'mask' for the inner workings of the Japanese state.

To historically contextualise Yamamoto's role as a professional 'mask' for the Japanese state, from the mid-1930s until Japan's surrender in 1945, Japan's military-led government mobilised the entire nation for war through the

championing of the concept of *kokutai* (national polity).¹³² *Kokutai* (国体), literally translating into ‘national body’, became something of a state religion, with the mystical emperor at the apex, and it transformed in the war years into a particularly formidable edifice that brooked no dissent.¹³³ Shinto scholar Motohiko Anzu’s description of the relationship between the State and the *kokutai* renders the State as a kind of skin for this ‘national body’: ‘If you regard a State as a form or container the contents that fill this form or container is the reality of a state, that is the *kokutai*.’¹³⁴ Yamamoto’s blank skin exemplifies his absolute allegiance to the Japanese state, the ‘treated’ and trained mask of the secret agent that he maintains even under threat of death: ‘Yamamoto had seemed resigned to death from the moment of our capture; his face showed not the slightest hint of expression’ (p. 156). It should be noted here that Yamamoto’s blank skin is another layer of skin that he grows or develops, like Noburu, as camouflage and protection.

That this character shares the same surname as Yamamoto Isoroku, the commander in chief of Japan’s Combined Fleet during World War II, who was perhaps Japan’s greatest strategist and who contrived the surprise air attack on U.S. naval forces at Pearl Harbor, reinforces this sense of allegiance and bodily integration between individual and state.¹³⁵ As the fictional namesake of ‘Japan’s Number One’ in wartime, Yamamoto’s sacrifice of his physical skin without revealing the information that he is tortured for, and the ‘face-obsessed’ (p. 497) Japanese army’s subsequent act of keeping this ‘top-secret matter’ (p. 169) off their formal records, keeps the *kokutai* intact. Yamamoto is thus also suggested to be Noburu’s double.

But Murakami punctures this wartime image of ‘Japan as Number One’ by showing Yamamoto’s skin sacrifice as meaningless and a farce. Yamamoto does not know the letter’s whereabouts—Mamiya understands this fact from

¹³² Noriko Kawamura, *Emperor Hirohito and the Pacific War* (Seattle and London: University of Washington Press, 2015), p. 185.

¹³³ Douglas N. Slaymaker, *The Body in Postwar Japanese Fiction* (London: RoutledgeCurzon, 2004), p. 11.

¹³⁴ *Proceedings: The Second International Conference for Shintō Studies* (Tokyo: Kokugakuin University, 1968), p. 64. Cited in Joseph M. Kitagawa, ‘The Japanese *Kokutai* (National Community) History and Myth’, *History of Religions*, 13.3 (1974), 209-226 (p. 209).

¹³⁵ ‘April 04, 1884: Yamamoto Isoroku, Japan’s mastermind of the Pearl Harbor attack, is born’, *History.com*, 2009 <<http://www.history.com/this-day-in-history/yamamoto-isoroku-japans-mastermind-of-the-pearl-harbor-attack-is-born>> [accessed 27 September 2016] (para. 1 of 5).

Yamamoto's facial expression—so he had no information to reveal, even if he wanted to (p. 152). To make matters worse, Yamamoto is informed by his torturer—a Russian intelligence officer nicknamed Boris the Manskiner—that he and Mamiya were captured because their own people had betrayed them: 'I know who you are. And I know what you are doing here. We have friends in Hailar, just as you have friends in Ulan Bator' (p. 156). Yamamoto has been meaninglessly sacrificed for a *kokutai* that has lost its 'bodily integrity' and that was really at war with itself, reflecting the internal aggressiveness that remains rampant in contemporary mediatised Japanese society.

The *kokutai*'s weaknesses are kinaesthetically represented through Yamamoto's body, specifically his skin. Yamamoto's composed, 'treated' skin as a secret agent becomes a liability instead of an advantage. Despite his civilian camouflage, Yamamoto's body leaks information about his military training to his comrades and critically, to his enemies; this leaking recalls the earlier understanding of the skin as both protecting us from others and exposing us to them: 'This Yamamoto fellow might have been wearing civilian clothes, but anybody could tell at a glance that he was a professional soldier. The look in his eyes, the way he spoke, his posture: it was obvious.' (p. 136) Boris, who orders Yamamoto's flaying, reads the latter's profession from his body accurately; in a sense, he had already started 'skinning' Yamamoto with his eyes: 'the man was a professional. He was bound to have an ugly death sooner or later.' (p. 160) By suggesting that the bodily integration between individual and state leads to an 'ugly death' rather than as the 'honourable death'¹³⁶ as portrayed by the Japanese military, particularly that of a character sharing the same name of Japan's 'Number One' figure during wartime, Mamiya's account of his own particular lived war experience is potentially weaponised to 're-treat' and to reconstruct the face and image of Japanese nationalism as shown to the world.

¹³⁶ This notion of an 'honourable death' draws inspiration from M. G. Sheftall's description of the mindsets of *kamikaze* pilots in the Second World War: 'Ostensibly "volunteers", these young men were told over and over again not only by their military superiors but also by the mass media apparatus at the disposal of the state that—outside of the extreme unlikelihood of ultimate victory against the Allies—there could be no greater glory for Japanese fighting men than to sacrifice their lives in suicide attacks to defend the sacred soil of their homeland as a proud nation prepared to choose "the honourable death of 100 million" [...] over the ignominy of surrender and foreign occupation'. M. G. Sheftall, 'Japanese War Veterans and *Kamikaze* Memorialization: A Case Study of Defeat Remembrance as Revitalization Movement', in *Defeat and Memory: Cultural Histories of Military Defeat in the Modern Era*, ed. by Jenny Macleod (Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008), pp. 154-174 (p. 155).

Mamiya's account 're-treats' the face of Japanese nationalism through graphic exposure, to compete with other images in a mediated society accustomed to the blood sport of 'intellectual gladiators' like Noburu. Through Mamiya's eyes, Yamamoto's 'ugly death' unfolds in vivid detail, his skin becoming a useless artifact. Peeled off like 'the way you'd peel a peach. Beautifully, without a single scratch' (p. 159) under a Mongolian soldier's knife, Yamamoto's skin undergoes a kind of 'treatment' whereby as 'blood kept dripping from the skin', the Mongolian soldiers 'spread it out to dry the way we might dry a sheet' (pp. 159-60).

As Yamamoto's skin is laid out in bloody pieces on the sand like war trophies, it only holds the Mongolian soldiers' attention for its aesthetics:

The soldiers had laid out the pieces of Yamamoto's skin and were standing by them, discussing something. They seemed to be exchanging opinions on the finer points of the skimmers' technique.

(p. 161)

This 'treatment' of the pieces of Yamamoto's skin renders them 'nameless articles of consumption'. The Mongolian soldiers' behaviour also reflects that of a contemporary mediated audience, captivated by 'intellectual gladiators' whose entertainment value depends on 'the redder the blood they drew, the better'. Their faces are 'expressionless, showing neither disgust nor excitement nor shock. They watched Yamamoto's skin being removed a piece at a time with the same kind of faces we might have if we were out for a stroll and stopped to have a look at a construction site' (p. 160).

But Yamamoto's skin, so graphically exposed, crucially misdirects attention away from his detached, bloody corpse. This 'a bloody red lump of meat from which every trace of skin had been removed' pains Mamiya:

The most painful sight was the face. Two large white eyeballs stared out from the red mass of flesh. Teeth bared, the mouth stretched wide open as if in a shout. Two little holes were all that remained where the nose had been removed.

(p. 160)

It is this rotted face of pain—the 'used up' body—that Murakami wants to graphically expose and superimpose over the blank skins of Japanese nationalism

and neo-nationalism, represented by Yamamoto and Noburu respectively. Forever frozen in the middle of a shout, Yamamoto's skinned face as the 'used up' body is now preserved and archived as if in the act of trying to say something to the world, reinforcing the painful price he pays for his silence and allegiance to the *kokutai*.

As his sacrifice was ultimately meaningless, the content of Yamamoto's unspoken message is unimportant. Rather, by showing *how* Yamamoto's sacrifice to keep up the nationalist image of 'Japan as Number One' was a farce, and kinaesthetically representing this through the 'treatment' of his skin, Murakami forwards an alternative image and representation of Japanese war aggression through Mamiya's account and lived experience of the war. In turn, Murakami's archival preservation of Yamamoto's skinned face through his prosthetic 'shell' of a body, now transmitted to Toru, enacts another mediated recontextualisation. Modifying the body of this loyal spy from suffering an 'ugly death' instead of an honorable one through graphic exposure and 'treatment' of his skinned face with motor intentionality, this is the reconstructed 'face' of Japanese nationalism that Murakami wants to put forward for contemporary generations to consume and share through their everyday media practices, so as to shock them into understanding the corporeal consequences of such sacrifice and thus invite them to effect change through a 'somatic mode of attention that is designed to alert them to the *qualities*, not the results, of our acts'¹³⁷.

A WORK OF ART

However, could Murakami's graphic exposure and 'treatment' of Yamamoto's skinned face as a form of resistance be ultimately ineffective—just another addition to a mediated society's white noise? Speaking about the 1995 sarin gas attack in the Tokyo Underground—an act of domestic terrorism—Murakami is aware of this as he lamented how the attack was rendered banal, 'consumed in a sea of media coverage'¹³⁸. In a book he later wrote on the attack,

¹³⁷ Noland, p. 6.

¹³⁸ Howard W. French, 'Seeing a Clash of Social Networks; A Japanese Writer Analyzes Terrorists and Their Victims', *The New York Times*, 15 October 2001

Murakami also expresses his shock from reading a letter by the wife of a survivor, who had lost his job because of the attack:

there was nothing particularly plaintive about it, nor was it an angry rant. If anything, it was barely audible, a grumble under the breath [...] The letter shocked me. Here were people who still carried serious psychological scars. [...] As if it weren't enough to be the victim of purely random violence, the man had suffered 'secondary victimization' (everyday corporate violence of the most pervasive kind). [...] Whatever the reason, his colleagues had singled out this young salaryman [...] He was probably quite unaware of their 'them-and-us' attitude. Appearances were deceptive. He would have considered himself a dyed-in-the-wool Japanese like everyone else. I grew curious to learn about the woman who wrote in about her husband. Personally, I wanted to probe deeper into how Japanese society could perpetuate such a double violence.¹⁴⁰

Published in the original Japanese in the same year as the sarin gas attack, *The Wind-Up Bird Chronicle* probes this 'double violence' lying beneath the skin of contemporary affluent Japanese society. Murakami has stated: 'Violence [is] the key to Japan.'¹⁴¹ By peeling off Yamamoto's skin not only to show how it is 'treated' as another 'nameless article of consumption' but also to redirect attention to his 'used up' corpse that cannot exist without its mediating layer, and reconstructing Yamamoto's pained face through Mamiya's prosthetic 'shell', Murakami wants generations physically untouched by war and hence only know about the Asia-Pacific war through mass media to see 'breathing and pulsating there but the same old sealed national system or ideology'—to remember this 'ugly death'. After all, for Japanese of Murakami's generation and beyond, the war exists as 'a thing half-known from childhood, something [they] had taken for granted, had never questioned or pursued',¹⁴².

Indeed, before meeting Mamiya, Toru's knowledge about Nomonhan came solely from Mr Honda (p. 53). And like the television blasting news from the NHK channel in the background, Honda's stories of Nomonhan came across like fairytales or old Kurosawa movies:

<<http://www.nytimes.com/2001/10/15/arts/seeing-clash-social-networks-japanese-writer-analyzes-terrorists-their-victims.html?mcubz=2>> [accessed 23 July 2017] (para. 24 of 33).

¹⁴⁰ Haruki Murakami, *Underground: The Tokyo Gas Attack and the Japanese Psyche*, trans. by Alfred Birnbaum and Philip Gabriel (London: Vintage, 2003), pp. 3-4.

¹⁴¹ Ian Buruma, 'Becoming Japanese', *The New Yorker*, 23 and 30 December 1996, p. 70. Cited in Rubin, p. 61.

¹⁴² Rubin, p. 64.

Most of them were bloody, but coming from the mouth of a dying old man in a dirty old robe, the details of battle lost the ring of reality. They sounded more like fairytales.

(p. 53)

Yamamoto's act of meaningless sacrifice suggests that the nationalist and neo-nationalist bodily integration between individual and state is so complete—the fusion of skin layers—that the only way of 'breaking the spell' (p. 580) that Noburu's made-for-TV skin keeps the mediatised masses under is to peel this entire skin off and expose the secret agent's body as 'all one raw wound'¹⁴³. The sacrificed, 'used-up' body that has been made to disappear, now graphically reappears in its materiality to 'speak' for itself.

More importantly, it is the kinaesthesia of this skinning that Murakami wants us to remember and stay aware of. It is with kinaesthetic awareness of the skin and its movement as it is peeled off the body—a process that Mamiya reluctantly describes as 'something like a work of art' (p. 159)—that we learn how this bodily substance can be 'treated', manipulated, and recontextualised to project a certain image of war for consumption in a mediatised society. It is this movement of the skin gruesomely and meaninglessly peeled off that Murakami wants the contemporary mediatised masses to keep watching, so that they begin to realise the corporeal consequences of their own sacrifices as 'company warriors' toiling away for the global image of 'Japan as Number One' and their roles in steering society towards an internal war between 'winners' and 'losers'. Murakami wants contemporary Japanese citizens to keep replaying this skinning in their heads, like Mamiya does, so that they kinaesthetically experience the rotting away of their own bodies as they sacrifice themselves meaninglessly for Japan's post-war economic development:

I would close my eyes and see Yamamoto being skinned alive. I dreamed about it over and over. Again and again I watched them peel the skin off and turn him into a lump of flesh. I could hear his heartrending screams. I also had dreams of myself slowly rotting away, alive, in the bottom of the well. Sometimes it seemed to me that that was what really happened and that my life here was the dream.

(p. 171)

¹⁴³ Claudia Benthien, *Skin: on the cultural border between self and the world*, trans. by Thomas Dunlap (New York: Columbia University Press, 2002), p. 71.

This is Murakami's kinaesthetic response to Margot Norris's question regarding the tricky and difficult task of representing war through media:

Can art overcome its internal constitutive difficulty in addressing the violent, the cruel, and the ugly without transforming it into beauty, without endowing it with aesthetic effects, without arousing pleasure, without bringing to redemption what should be irredeemable?¹⁴⁴

As we have seen, Murakami overcomes this difficulty precisely by drawing attention to these 'aesthetic effects' via the skin and exposing them as artistic manipulations. In doing so, he also shows how the neo-nationalist image of 'Japan as Number One'—which covers up the violence of the country's wartime aggression—can be reconstructed in other ways, by the marginalised 'losers' who have been themselves been 'covered up' and made to disappear.

Just as Toru begins to plough through archives and do his own research on Nomonhan after Mamiya's visit—a journey that also begins to connect him through the computer to his disappeared, estranged wife and to uncover the violence that lies beneath Noburu's 'treated', made-for-TV skin—it is suggested that Murakami hopes for present generations to do the same. This is not to say that such reconstructions will lay to rest the ghosts of Japan's violent military past, but Murakami suggests that a kind of peace can be achieved. This is reflected in Mamiya's own sense of peace after sharing his story via a letter with Toru:

To tell you the truth, I have no idea what this long, strange story of mine will mean to you, Mr Okada. Perhaps it is nothing more than an old man's mutterings. But I wanted to—I had to—tell you my story. As you can see from having read my letter, I have lived my life in total defeat. [...] A walking shell, I will simply disappear into darkness. Having managed at long last, however, to pass my story on to you, Mr Okada, I will be able to disappear with some small degree of contentment.

(p. 564)

Mamiya's feeling that he is able to 'disappear with some small degree of contentment' after passing on his story retains a sense of misdirection as both him, Yamamoto, and the secret letter that cost them their lives remain 'covered

¹⁴⁴ Margot Norris, *Writing War in the Twentieth Century* (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 2000), p. 20.

up'. But by sharing *how* their wartime sacrifices were meaningless, Mamiya can show that these disappeared or 'invisible' bodies have really been 'used up', thus allowing him to finally rest in peace.

Like Adichie's deployment of the genocide narrative, Murakami does not put forward Mamiya's story as definitive information (suggested to be 'nothing more than an old man's mutterings'). Rather, Mamiya's story of Yamamoto's skinning illuminates another direction in which images that perpetuate certain media representations of war could be 're-treated', suggesting the possibility for alternative reconstructions of Japanese military past—as shown from Toru's decision to do his own research on Nomonhan and the Asia-Pacific War. Murakami has said: 'What I write are stories in which the hero is looking for the right way in this world of chaos.'¹⁴⁵ That at the end of the novel, Mamiya's story empowers Toru and Kumiko to stop Noburu from repeating Japan's violent history—Noburu suffers a stroke and dies when Kumiko switches off his life support machine (p. 598)—suggests that Mamiya's story, as it is transmitted through letters written by his prosthetic shell of a hand, has pointed Toru in the right direction. That is to say, from Noburu's death, we have begun to see the effects that weaponising war accounts like Mamiya's—accounts that are attentive to local lived experiences of war—can have to resist global media representations of the same event that marginalise certain people instead and render them 'invisible' in the global media ecology.

CONCLUSION

In this chapter, we have seen that acts of 'treating' skin as presented in *Half of a Yellow Sun* and *The Wind-Up Bird Chronicle* signify practices of resistance that account for lived experiences of globalisation at different local cultural sites. I have argued that Adichie's and Murakami's representations of the skin as a fleshy interface are attentive to bodily kinaesthesia—how sentient bodies move and engage with the world through a form of 'corporeal consciousness' that informs their lived experiences of globalisation. I have also shown that by rendering these practices of marginalised bodies 'treating' their

¹⁴⁵ French (para. 26).

skins as a way of modifying how they are represented in global media, these people who are in the midst of war resist the homogenisation of their particular experiences amid an age of universal comparison in the new media ecology. Both novels show this new media ecology as shaped through the medium of film—as photography and as through television screens—which is a kind of technology that operates as a kind of interface, like skin, between a viewer and a world. Adichie and Murakami suggest this age of universal comparison in the new media ecology that violently homogenises bodies and their movements makes certain people invisible.

Both novels show how these practices of skin ‘treatment’ are enacted at respective sites of Nigeria and Japan. In *Half of a Yellow Sun*, these skin ‘treatments’ as practised by two Biafran soldiers, Madu and Ugwu, show them as aware of how, as contemporary experience is increasingly mediated on a global scale—making the civil war that they are involved in become highly visible in the global media—their own particular lived experience of this same war is sidelined. Adichie shows the physical effects of this globalising force on Madu’s and Ugwu’s bodies as rendering them invisible in the new media ecology. Yet by showing how Madu and Ugwu manipulate and modify the skins of these ‘invisible’ bodies, Adichie suggests that these people in war have agency in presenting their own lived experience of the war (as genocide) that interfaces with, resists, and reconstructs contemporary negative portrayals of African people as passive victims of starvation. In doing so, Adichie shows Madu and Ugwu as weaponising media at their locality for their resistance.

As Adichie states in an interview, she was ultimately ‘determined to make my novel about what I like to think of as the *grittiness* of being human—a book about relationships, about people who have sex and eat food and laugh, about people who are fierce consumers of life’¹⁴⁶. This statement reflects Adichie’s determination to render the tangible experience of war—the ‘Biafran experience’. In doing so, she opens up other practices through which alternative reconstructions can be done.

In *The Wind-Up Bird Chronicle*, Murakami uses skin ‘treatment’ practices to show how the global media image of contemporary post-war Japan

¹⁴⁶ Adichie, ‘African “Authenticity” and the Biafran Experience’, pp. 50-51.

as successful on the world stage—a ‘winner’—denies the local experience of its ‘precarious’ class who are toiling away for the country and sacrificing themselves. Indeed, Murakami shows contemporary Japan as a bi-polarised society of ‘winners’ versus ‘losers’ that is engaged in an ‘internal war’. But by showing how Japan has historically ‘treated’ the skin of one of its loyal citizens so violently during World War II as to become a useless artefact—a war trophy—this local, particular experience of the old Japanese soldier Mamiya resists the global media representation of a victorious post-war Japan in the eyes of the world. Like Adichie, Murakami shows the effectiveness of this resistance as more of opening up the space for alternative reconstructions of local experience that could offer peace.

For both authors, then, it is by thinking of the skin as an interface that we get a sense of the motor intentionality underlying the resistance practices of marginalised peoples. Adichie’s and Murakami’s kinaesthetic presentation of the skin as a fleshy interface between body and world allows us to understand how a war participant’s representation or ‘body image’ can be manipulated through media, as well as how the participants’ bodies have the ability and agility to reconstruct these media representations in spite of external representation or determination so as to assert their own experiences of war as they have lived it. This agility exemplifies bodily-kinaesthetic intelligence of the mediated body, particularly in relation to its skin. In turn, through their resistance practices, these people have begun to mobilise others to interpret war in alternative ways rather than to accept an official account that suppresses certain lived experiences, thus reflecting how these qualities can invite subjects to effect change. This sense of motor intentionality and resistance through the interface of the skin thus develops our understanding of how resistance could be enacted from the previous chapter for considering war in the contemporary era, particularly when war is now conducted in an increasingly mediatised world and the media can be weaponised in quicker and more agile ways in relation to the representation of the experiences of war participants that would, in turn, affect the outcome of war.

At the same time, by thinking of the skin as an ‘interface’, there is already potential to think of the body’s role in the haptic technologies—the technologies of touch—that are increasingly shaping our world today, of which the new media ecology is constituted. While in this chapter, I have focused on a

media ecology made up of news journalism, television broadcasts, social media, and film, in the contemporary era there is also the increasing presence of artificially intelligent technologies that means we now exist in increasingly ‘lively’ technologised global environments. Contemporary experience is technologised in such new ways that it has been described as posthuman.

If this is the case, why not continue to think through the skin to understand the workings of local, particular resistance? While skin—with its relation to media, representation, and body image in a local-global context as explored in this chapter—can be helpful to expand on my exploration of the relationship between the body and technology, I think we are already living in posthuman environments, which calls for other kinaesthetic ways of understanding the body—specifically, the body as tool and as techne. Indeed, Donna J. Haraway has posed the question: ‘Why should our bodies end at the skin, or include at best other beings encapsulated by skin?’¹⁴⁸ And from Mamiya’s prosthetic hand, there is a burgeoning suggestion that in a post-war world, ‘our sense of connection to our tools is heightened’¹⁴⁹.

This is especially since, even as they are mediated, we have begun to sense the instability of these bodies under the tools of war, as Yamamoto’s skin is flayed off his body and Ugwu’s skin decays under daily war operations. The human skin can unravel under the tools of war, but it has also been rebuilt or re-engineered under technologised globalisation to become more reliable, for example through prosthetic technology (as Mamiya’s prosthetic hand attests). Indeed, we can think of Mamiya as the early prototype of a cyborg soldier. But we can also begin to see the contemporary Japan in *The Wind-Up Bird Chronicle* as one that is populated with cyborgs—those ‘company warriors’ whose lived experiences of the world are so mediatised that they have become cyborgs themselves in a posthuman world. Underlying their cyborgism is the fact that their bodies have been engineered to function reliably in their roles as the nation’s ‘company warriors’ that they now exist in a global techno-utopia. But as we have seen, this kind of technological practice that has homogenised their

¹⁴⁸ Donna J. Haraway, *Simians, Cyborgs, and Women: The Reinvention of Nature* (New York: Routledge, 1991), p. 178.

¹⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 178.

bodily movements has also marginalised certain other bodies like Toru and Kumiko.

The question becomes: how have these marginalised bodies reconfigured their engineered bodies for particular resistance against globalisation? I propose that we can think about the body as *techne*—specifically, we can consider how bodies are made to function reliably in a posthuman globalised world, and how they resist such determination by being unreliable. In the next chapter, I will consider how reliability and unreliability enable us to think about universal-particular, local-global tensions and resistances through bodily kinaesthesia.

4

Bodies of Unreliability

From the previous chapter, we begin to get a sense of the instability of human bodies, under the aggressions of war and its technologies in the late twentieth century. Haruki Murakami's visceral depiction of the torturous shearing of Japanese spy Yamamoto's skin off his body by sharp Mongolian knives in *The Wind-Up Bird Chronicle* (1998), and Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie's gesture towards the decay of African houseboy Ugwu's skin under daily war operations in *Half of a Yellow Sun* (2006) show these bodies as they unravel both perceptibly and imperceptibly under the unremitting touch of the tools of war. Post-war, post-nuclear bodies bear the markings of the violence that 'an institutionalized and rationalized mechanism for continuously and systemically innovating military technology'¹ produced on a global scale.

Yet, as attested by global developments in prosthetic technology and plastic surgery in the post-war period (of which the character Lieutenant Mamiya in *The Wind-Up Bird Chronicle* is an example), we also enter into ever more intimate relations with technology as we use technology to repair our bodies and hold them together.² Mid-twentieth century medical advances in organ

¹ Alex Roland, 'War and Technology', *Foreign Policy Research Institute*, 27 February 2009 <<http://www.fpri.org/article/2009/02/war-and-technology/>> [accessed 18 May 2017] (para. 33 of 34).

² Regarding prosthetic technology, Katherine Ott notes that: 'Government contracts for prosthetics for military veterans have been one of the most influential forces in simulating new designs'. This is because 'With nearly every modern war, governments have quickly mobilized to repair the bodies of their soldier casualties'. She also maps how these prostheses gradually gave way to new formulations in the mid-twentieth century, observing that the prosthetic engineers and biotechnicians who went on to work with NASA in the U.S. space programme 'looked to robotics and cybernetics for solutions to the physical limitations humans would encounter in outer space', while 'Others became caught up in the thrill of using neuronal implants and nanotechnology to increase the efficiency of human function'. Katherine Ott, 'The Sum of Its Parts: An Introduction to Modern Histories of Prosthetics', in *Artificial Parts, Practical Lives: Modern Histories of Prosthetics*, ed. by Katherine Ott, David Serlin, and Stephen Mihm (New York and London: New York University Press, 2002), pp. 1-44 (pp. 18-26). Regarding plastic surgery, Heather Laine Talley notes that men returning from the war were disfigured in large numbers, and surgeons began to develop procedures that they hoped would help men integrate

transplantation technologies have also meant that these technological procedures have become more invasive, repairing bodies from the inside by reconstructing their contents and implanting human and non-human material within them to hold them together. In the contemporary era, this ability and use of technology to ‘re-engineer’ bodies in such invasive yet also restorative ways has radically revised organic constructs of the body as flesh and blood into hybrid understandings of the body as human and machine.

The fact that today, the technological means to reconstruct one’s body for continued survival are available—should one’s body fail in its functions—radically transforms our experiences of embodiment in a globalising world. Such technological means include enabling the stable transfer of organs from one organic body to another, and this is applicable whether or not one presently holds organic or inorganic implantations within one’s body. Such contemporary modes of embodiment are characterised by the even tighter and intertwined ‘coupling between organism and machine’, which Donna J. Haraway, in her seminal essay ‘A Cyborg Manifesto: Science, Technology, and Socialist-Feminism in the Late Twentieth Century’ (1985), first configured through the image of the cyborg: ‘a cybernetic organism, a hybrid of machine and organism, a creature of social reality as well as a creature of fiction’³.

In the contemporary era, there is another related area of technological development that has also significantly changed experiences of embodiment in a globalising world, such as to reconfigure the sense of existing as cyborgs. This is the rise of digital technologies such as computers, which has led to the pervasive presence of intelligent machines in everyday life and global work environments. Aside from allowing people to interact with one another without being physically co-present through the World Wide Web, the accelerating permeation of artificial intelligence (AI) in everyday life—from online customer support chat bots, to the SIRI function on our phones, to Google’s search algorithms, and to smart home devices such as thermostats—exemplifies both the global population’s

into their post war lives. Heather Laine Talley, ‘Getting Work Done: Cosmetic Surgery as Constraint, as Commodity, as Commonplace’, in *Routledge Handbook of Body Studies*, ed. by Bryan S. Turner (Oxford: Routledge, 2012), pp. 335-346 (p. 335).

³ Donna J. Haraway, *Simians, Cyborgs, and Women: The Reinvention of Nature* (New York: Routledge, 1991), pp. 149-50.

progressive kinaesthetic entanglement with these technologies and the growing reach of intelligent machines and systems in structuring global society.

Co-existing with these artificially intelligent technologies in increasingly ‘lively’, technologised global environments that are programmed by human bodies, human bodies themselves also gradually become ‘re-engineered’ through these interactions with digital technologies. An example of this can be seen in how body movements have changed with the changing interfaces of mobile phones, such that from pressing buttons to input commands, we can now touch the phone screen and even talk to the device via SIRI. As touch-screen technology or fingerprint ID depends precisely upon the intimacy of skin-contact with machine, this recalls my point at the end of the previous chapter about how we can think more about the body’s role in the haptic technologies that are increasingly shaping our world today. As these haptic technologies involve developing our machines to have more intuitive interfaces, so as to make our interactions with our machines ever more seamless, our sense of our own agency as enacted through our bodies—what I have called ‘motor intentionality’—can be affected, which I will explore in this chapter through the workings of the body as techne or the body-in-process.

Such innovative and intimate re-engineering of human bodies with medical and artificially intelligent technologies in the contemporary era, then, arguably gesture towards a techno-utopianism that drives globalising processes today. This techno-utopianism is shaped through the perspective suggesting that as global technological advancements re-engineer us all towards becoming posthuman cyborgs, technology is also assumed never to fail in providing all-encompassing solutions that can remedy and resolve existing inequalities in the global political economy.

Such techno-utopianism underlies, for instance, the announcement put out by Facebook founder Mark Zuckerberg and his wife Priscilla Chan that their foundation, the Chan Zuckerberg Initiative (CZI), will donate \$3 billion to fund a global plan for ‘curing, preventing, and managing all diseases that affect us now’⁴. Regarding the announcement, Rafi Letzer offers the view that ‘In short,

⁴ Mark Zuckerberg, ‘Live with Priscilla from San Francisco for a Chan Zuckerberg Initiative announcement’, *Facebook*, 21 September 2016
<<https://www.facebook.com/zuck/videos/10103120865133051/>> [accessed 18 May 2017].

CZI plans to make it possible for large groups of scientists to focus on riskier projects that won't necessarily yield results for years or even decades. That is, they want to give medical scientists the opportunity to work like coders in an ambitious Silicon Valley startup⁵—a perspective that registers the sense of technology as a global, enabling force that will definitely work for the benefit for all, when fuelled with the right incentives. Techno-utopianism also underlies the rhetoric of American inventor and futurist Raymond 'Ray' Kurzweil, who asserts: 'In 20 years we'll be meeting all of our energy needs with solar [...] People say we're running out of energy. That's only true if we stick with these old 19th century technologies. We are awash in energy from the sunlight'⁶. Similar to Zuckerberg and Chan, Kurzweil's optimistic view of the future is based on his faith that technological evolution will solve existing problems all in a matter of time.

Imre Szeman considers how global discourses of technological evolution figure specifically in the disaster narratives of the end of oil, but his view of the role of technology in techno-utopianism is helpful here: 'Technology is figured as just around the corner, as always just on the verge of arriving. Innovation can be hurried along [...] but only slightly: technological solutions arrive just in time and never fail to come'⁷. Yet while techno-utopianism in itself is not necessarily a negative idea, there are existing anomalies amid this techno-utopian practice of engineering human bodies and artificial intelligence systems for global human progress that need to be brought into view.⁸

⁵ Rafi Letzer, 'Here's what's behind Mark Zuckerberg and Priscilla Chan's \$3 billion plan to cure all disease', *Business Insider UK*, 21 September 2016 <<http://uk.businessinsider.com/mark-zuckerberg-cure-all-disease-explained-2016-9>> [accessed 18 May 2017] (para. 4 of 18).

⁶ Lauren Feeney, 'Futurist Ray Kurzweil isn't worried about climate change', *The Daily Need*, 26 February 2011 <<http://www.pbs.org/wnet/need-to-know/environment/futurist-ray-kurzweil-isnt-worried-about-climate-change/7389/>> [accessed 18 May 2017] (para. 9 of 21).

⁷ Imre Szeman, 'System Failure: Oil, Futurity, and the Anticipation of Disaster', *South Atlantic Quarterly*, 106.4 (2007), 805-23 (p. 814).

⁸ Michael Hauskeller observes that Haraway herself posits a techno-utopia in her manifesto. He cites her assertion that her manifesto 'is also an effort to contribute to socialist-feminist culture and theory in a postmodernist, non-naturalist mode and in the utopian tradition of imagining a world without gender, which is perhaps a world without genesis, but maybe also a world without end'. Haraway, p. 150. Hauskeller also notes that in an interview, Haraway gives credence to the power of utopia: 'I suppose there is a kind of fantastic hope that runs through a manifesto. There's some kind of without warrant insistence that the fantasy of an elsewhere is not escapism but it's a powerful tool.' Nicholas Gane, 'When We Have Never Been Human, What Is to Be Done?: Interview with Donna Haraway', *Theory, Culture & Society*, 23:7-8 (2006), 135-58 (p. 152). Cited in Michael Hauskeller, 'Utopia', in *Posthumanism and Transhumanism: An*

These anomalies are uncovered through real-life consequences on human bodies, seen for example when progressive automation in industries has left people who are unable to take up new skills and quickly adapt themselves to their technologised environments behind.⁹ One example of this can be seen in Apple and Samsung supplier Foxconn's replacing of 60,000 factory workers with robots.¹⁰ In light of reported abysmal worker conditions and a high rate of employee suicide, Nick Statt observes that this move could be seen as Foxconn's attempt to 'relieve itself of any issues stemming from its treatment of workers without having to actually improve living and working conditions or increase wages'¹¹. Foxconn's act of replacing human workers with robots begins to show how machine-technology enters the workplace and disrupts human lives by supplanting human labour.

In the context of organ transplantation networks, the growing demand for life-saving transplant surgery has also meant that organ demand greatly outweighs supply which, in turn, has created a market in body parts where abuses are rife.¹² In this context, machine-technology now enters intimately into the inside of the human body. This shows an intensification of the effect of technology, as it crosses the barrier of human skin itself.

Introduction, ed. by Robert Ranisch and Stefan Lorenz Sorgner (Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 2014), pp. 101-08 (p. 105).

⁹ Erik Byrnjolfsson and Andrew McAfee, *Race Against the Machine: How The Digital Revolution is Accelerating Innovation, Driving Productivity, and Irreversibly Transforming Employment and the Economy* (Lexington, Massachusetts: Digital Frontier Press, 2011), p. 8.

¹⁰ Jane Wakefield, 'Foxconn replaces "60,000 factory workers with robots"', *BBC News*, 25 May 2016 <<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/technology-36376966>> [accessed 17 May 2017].

¹¹ Nick Statt, 'iPhone manufacturer Foxconn plants to replace almost every human worker with robots', *The Verge*, 30 December 2016

<<https://www.theverge.com/2016/12/30/14128870/foxconn-robots-automation-apple-iphone-china-manufacturing>> [accessed 18 May 2017] (para. 7 of 7). Regarding the abysmal worker conditions, Charles Duhigg and David Barboza report that in Foxconn's factory in Chengdu:

'Shifts ran 24 hours a day, and the factory was always bright. At any moment, there were thousands of workers standing on assembly lines or sitting in backless chairs, crouching next to large machinery, or jogging between loading bays. Some workers' legs swelled so much they waddled.' Charles Duhigg and David Barboza, 'In China, Human Costs Are Built Into an iPad', *The New York Times*, 25 January 2012

<<http://www.nytimes.com/2012/01/26/business/ieconomy-apples-ipad-and-the-human-costs-for-workers-in-china.html>> [accessed 18 May 2017] (para. 32 of 110). Regarding the high rate of employee suicides, Malcolm Moore writes that Foxconn 'has had a grim history of suicides at its factories. A suicide cluster in 2010 saw 18 workers throw themselves from the tops of the company's buildings, with 14 deaths'.

Malcolm Moore, "'Mass suicide" protest at Apple manufacturer Foxconn factory', *The Telegraph*, 11 Jan 2012

<<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/asia/china/9006988/Mass-suicide-protest-at-Apple-manufacturer-Foxconn-factory.html>> [accessed 18 May 2017] (para. 3 of 11).

¹² 'Organ transplants: The gap between supply and demand', *The Economist*, 9 October 2008 <<http://www.economist.com/node/12380981>> [accessed 12 May 2017] (para. 2 of 36).

Furthermore, caught up in the excitement of having increasingly ‘lively’ interactions with new technologies, it is easy to forget that technological systems are themselves inherently unreliable and inevitably break down—a point that will be expanded later in this chapter. Being attentive to such anomalies, then, can re-calibrate such techno-utopian perspectives that have the tendency to lean towards an instrumentalist understanding both of human bodies and of artificially intelligent technologies as inanimate tools to be put in the service of overall human progress and survival. Accordingly, these anomalies highlight how global technological advancement can exacerbate global technological disparity, and thus signify that technology cannot be expected to remedy or balance out existing structures of inequality.

Contemporary literary texts such as American writer Philip K. Dick’s novel *Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep?* (1968)¹³ and Japanese-British writer Kazuo Ishiguro’s novel *Never Let Me Go* (2005)¹⁴ register such techno-utopian ambivalence through bodily kinaesthesia. By bodily kinaesthesia, I refer to how sentient bodies move and engage with the world through time and space through a form of ‘corporeal consciousness’ which produces their lived experiences of the world.¹⁵ Both novels posit alternative posthuman futures where global society is actively shaped by the material presences of artificially intelligent technologies that ‘happen to be instantiated in a biological substrate’¹⁶—in the bodily forms of androids and clones respectively. In both novels, these alternative futures are shown to be moulded through and directed by techno-utopian practices that enforce the universal experience of technology as being an equalising force for the benefit of all.

But these two novels also register ambivalence in such techno-utopias that ultimately reveal these worlds to be techno-dystopias. Dick and Ishiguro examine this ambivalence through the dichotomies of predator-prey and guardian-student respectively—dichotomies that reference the instrumentalist understanding of the organic and the machinic under techno-utopianism (and pits

¹³ Philip K. Dick, *Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep?* (London: Gollancz, 2010). Further references are given after quotations in the text.

¹⁴ Kazuo Ishiguro, *Never Let Me Go* (London: Faber and Faber, 2005). Further references are given after quotations in the text.

¹⁵ Lisa Blackman, *The Body: The Key Concepts* (Oxford and New York: Berg, 2008), p. 83.

¹⁶ N. Katherine Hayles, ‘Unfinished Work: From Cyborg to Cognisphere’, *Theory, Culture & Society*, 23.7-8 (2006), 159-66 (p. 160).

them against each other), but that also begin to destabilise the rigidity of such instrumentalist understanding. More importantly, this chapter contends that it is the kinaesthetic way in which both Dick and Ishiguro present these dichotomies—depicting the physical movements of humans and androids/clones hunting, stalking, and shadowing each other—that they recuperate the tensions inherent in the confusion of organic-machinic boundaries that an instrumentalist techno-utopianism suppresses. I will show how both authors present their protagonists as engaging with a globalising world and asserting their own particular experiences of the world that are at odds with and resistant to the global, universal experience of techno-utopianism. This is with reference to how techno-utopianism has determined the movements of these bodies in certain ways. By embodied resistance, I mean the act of modifying one's bodily practices such that 'motor decisions' are made that challenge and resist cultural meanings.¹⁷

I propose analysing these bodily interactions between humans and artificially intelligent technologies through the notion of reliability. I borrow this notion from the field of reliability engineering, for the emphasis on the reliable maintenance of global technologised systems today—due to the serious consequences that arise from technological *unreliability*—also gestures towards techno-utopian ambivalence in contemporary global society. In the first three sections of this chapter, I will show how my kinaesthetic conception of reliability builds upon Haraway's cyborgism and N. Katherine Hayles' notion of functionality in her book *How We Became Posthuman: Virtual Bodies in Cybernetics, Literature, and Informatics* (1999). For both Haraway's and Hayles' concepts already begin to offer kinaesthetic methods of analyses that consider the 'confusion of boundaries'¹⁸ between organism and machine—which has inescapably shaped our modes of embodiment today—not as a threat to selfhood, but as a way forward to critique techno-utopian structures of inequality. But as I will explain in these sections, these concepts require updating in their own ways. I am also using the concept of reliability in a specific way of thinking about the body and bodily movement that is intertwined with technology and

¹⁷ Carrie Noland, *Agency and Embodiment: Performing Gestures/Producing Culture* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2009), p. 3.

¹⁸ Haraway, p. 150.

engineering, which is why I go into extended discussion about this concept. Therefore, reliability allows us to understand the workings of the body as techne.

Subsequently, using the notion of reliability to analyse the kinaesthetic interactions between human and artificially intelligent bodies in Dick's and Ishiguro's novels allows us to be attentive to the tensions inherent in the coupling of organism and machine which, in turn, uncover ambivalence within contemporary techno-utopian globalisation. Reliability also has the added advantage of having a working definition in literary studies—as in the unreliable narrator—thus ultimately offering us a sense of how these human and artificially intelligent bodies express their lived experiences of techno-utopian globalisation. I will also draw on British director Ridley Scott's film adaptation of Dick's novel, *Blade Runner* (1982)¹⁹, to supplement my analysis of the inherent unreliability of artificially intelligent technologies—a quality that not only undoes the promise of technology as never failing to arrive that underlies an instrumentalist techno-utopianism, but that also hints at a burgeoning independence or self-reliance, which I will show through the engineering of bodily cybernetic archives through the artificially intelligent performance of memory. By recuperating the tensions inherent in organic-machinic boundaries that an instrumentalist techno-utopianism suppresses, through understanding how posthuman bodies act unreliably when they are engineered to be reliable, we can begin to get a sense of the modes of resistance that Dick, Ishiguro, and Scott also forward in their narratives. These are modes of resistance that enable posthuman bodies that are marginalised under such global techno-utopianism to resist and survive in a world that systemically moves against them.

A CONFUSION OF BOUNDARIES

Written in the last years of the Cold War, Haraway's essay 'A Cyborg Manifesto: Science, Technology, and Socialist-Feminism in the Late Twentieth Century' called for a revision of modes of embodiment in a globalising world. Haraway found this revision in the context of cybernetics—the study of communication and control systems in living organisms and machines.

¹⁹ *Blade Runner: The Final Cut*, dir. by Ridley Scott (Warner Bros. Pictures, 2007).

Rendering the world as an ‘integrated circuit’, she put forward a provocative vision:

By the late twentieth century, our time, a mythic time, we are all chimeras, theorized and fabricated hybrids of machine and organism; in short, we are cyborgs. The cyborg is our ontology; it gives us our politics.²⁰

For Haraway, cyborgian awareness re-engineered the very fibres of our corporeality to contemporise our kinaesthetic awareness of our ‘new flesh’²¹, as enabled by global technological advances.

More importantly, this cyborgian awareness, with its confusion of organic-machinic boundaries, heightened awareness of what Haraway saw as the tendency of certain hegemonic discourses to perpetuate disempowering and disenabling techno-utopian ideologies. These were discourses in ‘the traditions of “Western” science and politics—the tradition of racist, male-dominant capitalism; the tradition of progress; the tradition of the appropriation of nature as resource for the productions of culture; the tradition of reproduction of the self from the reflections of the other’ that constructed ‘the relation between organism and machine [as] a border war’²²—the collateral damage being that certain groups of bodies that were fundamental to the workings of the global political economy disappeared from view. Accordingly, Haraway’s cyborgs were women of colour who were embedded in the integrated circuit of the world, who were ‘the preferred labour force for the science-based industries, the real women for whom the world-wide sexual market, labour market, and politics of reproduction kaleidoscope into daily life’²³. Haraway thus activated the vocabulary of cybernetics to kinaesthetically include these marginalised bodies and to assert their political agency through their body movements and embodied practices in the global political economy.

Twenty-one years later, in an article titled ‘Unfinished Work: From Cyborg to Cognisphere’ (2006), Hayles offers us a revised understanding of this confusion of boundaries between the organic and the machinic in light of the

²⁰ Haraway, pp. 149-50.

²¹ Hari Kunzru, ‘You Are Cyborg’, *Wired*, 2 January 1997
<<https://www.wired.com/1997/02/ffharaway/>> [accessed 25 April 2017] (para. 9 of 48).

²² Haraway, p. 150.

²³ *Ibid.*, p. 175.

‘transform[ations] [of] the conditions of life for millions of people’²⁴ in the world. She observes that at the centre of these transformations are ‘networked and programmable media, and they are impacting everything from sensorimotor functions and non-conscious cognitive processing to national political discourse and transnational economies’²⁵. Hayles adds that: ‘Given the complexities of these dynamics, the individual person—or for that matter, the individual cyborg—is no longer the appropriate unit of analysis, if indeed it ever was. At issue now (and in the past) are distributed cultural cognitions embodied both in people and their technologies’²⁶. The cyborg, in her words, ‘is not *networked* enough’²⁷.

This is not a wholesale dismissal of the cyborg as a metaphor for contemporary modes of embodiment. Rather, Hayles hones in specifically on the same confusion of boundaries between the organic and the machinic that Haraway’s cyborg first brought to light and mobilises this ‘relation’—‘the smallest unit of analysis’—for what she sees to be the more relevant study of the ‘shifting boundaries between human and machine cognition’²⁸ in the contemporary moment. Notably, Hayles first explored this organic-machinic relation in her book *How We Became Posthuman: Virtual Bodies in Cybernetics, Literature, and Informatics* in the abstract terms of marking a conceptual shift from the human to the posthuman. She regarded ‘the posthuman, like the “human”, as a historically specific and contingent term rather than a stable ontology’²⁹, arguing that:

Whereas the ‘human’ has since the Enlightenment been associated with rationality, free will, autonomy and a celebration of consciousness as the seat of identity, the posthuman in its more nefarious forms is construed as an informational pattern that happens to be instantiated in a biological substrate.³⁰

For Hayles, then, as with Haraway, the conception of the liberal humanist subject underwrote an instrumentalist techno-utopianism that variously constructed

²⁴ Hayles, ‘Unfinished Work: From Cyborg to Cognisphere’, p. 160.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 160.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 160.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 159.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 160-61.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 160.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 160.

‘man’ as a tool-user—whereby ‘Using tools may shape the body [...] but the tool nevertheless is envisioned as an object that is apart from the body, an object that can be picked up and put down at will’—and then as tool-maker³¹.

In her book, Hayles aimed to put forward ‘more benign forms of the posthuman that can serve as effective counterbalances to the liberal humanist subject, transforming untrammelled free will into a recognition that agency is always relational and distributed, and correcting an over-emphasis on consciousness to a more accurate view of cognition as embodied throughout human flesh and extended into the social and technological environment’³². In service to this aim of showing how alternative forms of posthumanism could recalibrate globalising, techno-utopian discourses, she activated the distinct categories of body, embodiment, and disembodiment (even though she later admitted that these distinctions were weakened by its underlying dualistic conception of the body that she tried hard to avoid³³). In developing her concept of posthuman subjectivity, Hayles suggested that the corporeal human body may or may not disappear, but a sense of embodiment endures: ‘it is not a question of leaving the body behind but rather of extending embodied awareness in highly specific, local, and material ways that would be impossible without electronic prosthesis’³⁴. For Hayles, embodiment made clear that ‘thought is a much broader cognitive function depending for its specificities on the embodied form enacting it’³⁵. A posthumanist mode of embodiment would, therefore, revise Haraway’s cyborgian confusion of boundaries for greater relevance in a contemporary, globalising world that was more networked. More significantly, retaining a sense of embodiment against the discourses of disembodiment (based on Cartesian dualism) that she saw as, once again, being rewritten into prevailing concepts of cybernetic subjectivity would allow us to survive in the world in a politically sustainable way, via:

³¹ Hayles, *How We Became Posthuman: Virtual Bodies in Cybernetics, Literature, and Informatics* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1999), p. 34.

³² Hayles, ‘Unfinished Work: From Cyborg to Cognisphere’, p. 160-61.

³³ N. Katherine Hayles, ‘Flesh and Metal: Reconfiguring the Mindbody in Virtual Environments’, *Configurations*, 10.2 (2002), 297-320 (p. 298).

³⁴ Hayles, *How We Became Posthuman: Virtual Bodies in Cybernetics, Literature, and Informatics*, p. 291.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, p. xiv.

a version of the posthuman that embraces the possibilities of information technologies without being seduced by fantasies of unlimited power and disembodied immortality, that recognizes and celebrates finitude as a condition of human being, and that understands human life is embedded in a material world of great complexity, one on which we depend for our continued survival.³⁶

Hayles has since revised her particular distinction between body and embodiment that she activated for her holistic analysis, admitting that this distinction kept her hostage to dualistic thinking about the organic-machinic border despite her efforts to avoid it.³⁷ As mentioned earlier, she currently finds it more productive by beginning with *relation* rather than preexisting entities, so as to recognise that embodied experience comes not only from the complex interplay between brain and viscera but also from the constant engagement of our embodied interactions with the environment.³⁸ She notes that:

Refusing to grant embodiment a status prior to relation opens the possibility that changes in the environment (themselves emerging from systemic and organized changes in the flux) are deeply interrelated with changes in embodiment. Living in a technologically engineered and information-rich environment brings with it associated shifts in habits, postures, enactments, perceptions—in short, changes in the experiences that constitute the dynamic lifeworld we inhabit as embodied creatures.³⁹

Hayles' renewed focus on organic-machinic relation, then, allows her to notate these changes in contemporary modes of embodiment in more dynamic fashion.

One significant instance that Hayles offers as exemplifying the kind of changes that bring about these shifts in embodied experience is how habits have the force to shape embodied responses, as in proprioception—the internal sense that gives us the feeling that we *occupy* our bodies rather than merely possess them.⁴⁰ Her citing of the testimonies provided by computer video game players who feel that they are projecting their proprioceptive sense into the simulated space of the game world, so much so that they feel the joystick as an unconscious extension of the hand, echoes the kinaesthetic awareness of the body as it moves

³⁶ Hayles, *How We Became Posthuman: Virtual Bodies in Cybernetics, Literature, and Informatics*, p. 5.

³⁷ Hayles, 'Flesh and Metal: Reconfiguring the Mindbody in Virtual Environments', p. 298.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 298.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 299.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 299.

in space that this thesis is attentive to, while situating this awareness in a technological context.

Yet if we also look back at Hayles' book *How We Became Posthuman: Virtual Bodies in Cybernetics, Literature, and Informatics*, there was one particular concept that she did briefly activate as enabling us to be alert or to 'attend to the material interfaces and technologies that make disembodiment such a powerful illusion'⁴¹ in theorising cybernetics—showing this organic-machinic relation in kinaesthetic performance. This was the concept of 'functionality'⁴², through which I will go on to develop the concept of 'reliability' that I propose to use in this chapter, to ultimately recuperate the tensions in the confusion of organic-machinic boundaries that, in turn, gesture towards ambivalence in the techno-utopian narratives that drive globalising technological processes in the contemporary era.

FUNCTIONALITY

Hayles re-appropriated the concept of functionality—as it was understood by virtual reality technologists—that described the communication modes that were active in a computer-human interface.⁴³ She elaborated the concept through these examples:

If the user wears a data glove, [...] hand motions constitute one functionality. If the computer can respond to voice-activated commands, voice is another functionality. If the computer can sense body position, spatial location is yet another functionality. Functionalities work in both directions; that is, they describe the computer's capabilities and also indicate how the user's sensory-motor apparatus is being trained to accommodate the computer's responses. Working with a VR simulation, the user learns to move his or her hand in stylized gestures that the computer can accommodate. In the process, the neural configuration of the user's brain experiences changes, some of which can be long-lasting. The computer molds the human even as the human builds the computer.⁴⁴

⁴¹ Hayles, *How We Became Posthuman: Virtual Bodies in Cybernetics, Literature, and Informatics*, p. 47.

⁴² *Ibid.*, p. 47.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, p. 47.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 47.

We see that Hayles' examples of functionality highlight the relation between human and computer, as performed and negotiated through body movement. Attending to computer-human functionality allowed Hayles to kinaesthetically enact a 'double vision that looks *simultaneously* at the power of simulation and at the materialities that produce it [in order to] understand the implications of articulating posthuman constructions together with embodied actualities'⁴⁵. In effect, this double vision allowed the contemporary posthuman subject to examine herself or himself in her/his embedded, technological relations in the integrated circuit of the world, paying attention to how her/his new carbon-silicon-based flesh moved in and moulded her/his cybernetic environment, as well as to how the changing material conditions and liveliness of this cybernetic environment, in turn, moved and moulded this new flesh. Through the concept of functionality, then, Hayles showed us the two-way, mutual engineering of the human body and of the machine in performance—offering us a kinaesthetic registration of the confusion of organic-machinic boundaries that has radically changed modes of embodiment in the contemporary, globalising world.

Furthermore, Hayles transposed this concept of functionality for analysing a category of contemporary literature that she called 'information narratives'⁴⁶. Specifically considering the role of the narrator—which she reminded us as implying 'a voice speaking, and a speaking voice implies a sense of presence'⁴⁷—she argued that these narratives registered the '*systematic devaluation of materiality and embodiment*'⁴⁸ that reflected the contemporary emphasis on information technologies. Such implicit challenges to physicality could be detected in literary strategies that, for instance, modified point of view as 'pov' (which constituted the character's subjectivity by serving as a positional marker substituting for his absent body) or constructed cyberspace as a data matrix.⁴⁹ Accordingly, she argued, the function of the narrator would change as we progressed deeper into virtuality, as he or she became a keyboarder, a hacker, or a manipulator of codes.⁵⁰

⁴⁵ Hayles, *How We Became Posthuman: Virtual Bodies in Cybernetics, Literature, and Informatics*, p. 47.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 35.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 43.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 48.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 37-38.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 46.

Whether this sense of the narrator's changing function in these literary texts constituted a 'dream or nightmare of the body as information'⁵¹, Hayles forwarded functionality as a methodology that could be useful for literary analysis of contemporary techno-utopian texts and their representations of lived experiences of contemporary globalisation. For functionality, with its double vision, more accurately attended to what she considered to be the tensions between embodiment and disembodiment inherent in the information technology revolution. It was Hayles' hope that the conceptual mode of functionality would enable us to remember the 'fragility of a material world that cannot be replaced', even as we 'rush[ed] to explore the new vistas that cyberspace has made available for colonization'⁵².

In its dynamic enactment of a double vision between human body and machine, then, Hayles's concept of functionality becomes promising as a kinaesthetic method of analysis for uncovering ambivalence in globalising techno-utopian practices as presented in contemporary literary texts. For the concept of functionality is attentive to how the organic and the machinic mutually engineer each other towards a posthuman subjectivity, and for Hayles, this 'put[s] back into the picture the flesh that continues to be erased in contemporary discussions about cybernetic subjects'⁵³ that inform techno-utopian globalisation.

However, since Hayles' original use of the concept of functionality was grounded in and thus held back by a dualistic conception of the body, I contend that functionality is not dynamic enough as a methodology to adequately register the tensions inherent in the confusion of organic-machinic boundaries—tensions that would also convey 'the same heady brew of resistance and co-option'⁵⁴ that Haraway's cyborg first offered. To reinforce the dynamism of Hayles' concept of functionality and imbue it with the political force that Haraway's cyborgism had, so as to better account for ambivalence in contemporary techno-utopian globalisation, I propose 're-engineering' the concept of functionality into that of reliability.

⁵¹ Hayles, *How We Became Posthuman: Virtual Bodies in Cybernetics, Literature, and Informatics*, p. 47.

⁵² *Ibid.*, p. 49.

⁵³ *Ibid.*, p. 5.

⁵⁴ Hayles, 'Unfinished Work: From Cyborg to Cognisphere', p. 159.

RELIABILITY

I borrow this concept of reliability from the field of engineering, whereby reliability is defined as ‘the probability of successful operation or *performance* of systems and their related equipment, with minimum risk of loss or disaster or of *system failure*’⁵⁵. To convey this in biomechanical terms, the reliability of the human body system can be understood through its consistency and quality in performing its biological functions as a corporeal unit, up to its point of breaking down. There is also an affective element in this concept as well, in that up until the point of its breaking down, the body is *trusted* to be in working condition—the question as to how fine this working condition is remains a question, that is, a matter of degrees. A body system’s reliability, then, is an active endurance of a state of certainty amid an indeterminate field—we know it will fail, but we do not know when it will fail. In other words, the reliability of a body system is both a measure and a sustained promise of its ability to function, up to the point of its failure.

I argue that ‘reliability’ is more productive than ‘functionality’ for a kinaesthetic analysis of ambivalence in contemporary techno-utopian globalisation. For the concept of reliability still facilitates the enactment of Hayles’ double vision in registering the interactive and embodied engineering of people and their technologies, but it also registers the possibility for anomalies in such interactions. Hayles’ use of the concept of functionality to notate how the human user and the computer mutually mould each other assumes that both the human user and the computer are working at optimum rate, and does not record the *unreliability* underlying such exercises. What if, for instance, the human user is not feeling her best when using her voice as a function for the computer?⁵⁶ Or what if the computer detects the hand motions of its human user but comes up with its own unique gestures? These anomalies that underpin such organic-machinic interactions are important to take into account, for they hint at

⁵⁵ Rudolph Frederick Stapelberg, *Handbook of Reliability, Availability, Maintainability and Safety in Engineering Design* (London: Springer-Verlag, 2009), p. 5.

⁵⁶ A real world example of this would be how the earlier versions of Apple’s Siri sounded snippy because the voice actress, Susan Bennett, would get bored during the recording process. Laura Stampler, ‘Voice of Siri Reveals Herself—And Why the iPhone “Assistant Sounds So Snippy’’, *TIME*, 4 October 2013 <<http://techland.time.com/2013/10/04/voice-of-siri-reveals-herself-and-why-the-iphone-assistant-sounds-so-snippy/>> [accessed 2 May 2017] (para. 3 of 4).

underlying tensions that can, on a larger scale, destabilise the techno-utopian practices that drive contemporary globalisation.

Indeed, the importance of acknowledging unreliability is not to be understated in the contemporary era of globalisation; as Rudolph Frederick Stapelberg notes: ‘Increased emphasis is being placed on the reliability of systems in the current technological revolution’⁵⁷. This is because the threat of armed conflict and stress on military preparedness, as well as an ever-increasing development in computerisation, micro-computerisation and its application in space programmes, have emphasised the consequences of *unreliability* of systems—which range from operator safety to economic consequences of system failure and, on a broader scale, to consequences that could affect national security and human lives.⁵⁸ The question of reliability, then, rises in importance in light of the growing reach of intelligent machines and systems in structuring global society. But that it becomes crucial for these technological systems to be kept reliable in their performance—because their inherent unreliability can spell serious consequences on human bodies—also keeps in tension and in question what Szeman earlier implied as the projected techno-utopian promise of global technological solutions not only to always be just on verge of arriving, but also of ‘never fail[ing] to come’⁵⁹.

Finally, the notion of reliability also recuperates the political agency that Haraway’s cyborgism enabled through its confusion of organic-machinic boundaries. For Haraway reminded us that the cyborgian, marginalised female bodies that continued to labour at the bottom rungs of the global technological economy performed their own movements of unreliability:

These cyborgs are the people who refuse to disappear on cue, no matter how many times a ‘Western’ commentator remarks on the sad passing of another primitive, another organic group done in by ‘Western’ technology, by writing. These real-life cyborgs (for example, the Southeast Asian village women workers in Japanese and US electronic firms described by Aihwa Ong) are actively rewriting the texts of their bodies and their societies.⁶⁰

⁵⁷ Stapelberg, p. 46.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 46.

⁵⁹ Szeman, p. 814.

⁶⁰ Haraway, p. 177.

Admittedly, Haraway's description of these marginalised bodies 'actively rewriting the texts of their bodies and their societies' here was grounded by a sense of textuality. This can be understood from her assertion of biotechnology as a 'writing technology' that performed '*the translation of the world into a problem of coding*'⁶¹.

However, Haraway was also attentive to the kinaesthesia of these marginalised bodies as bodily performances of unreliability. This can be seen in a later interview where Haraway insisted that her cyborgism was 'not a utopian dream but an on-the-ground working project' and that '*inhabiting* the cyborg is what this manifesto is about'⁶² (*italics mine*). As such, to interpret Haraway's description in kinaesthetic terms: by refusing to disappear so as to perpetuate the techno-utopian promise of technology as offering all-encompassing solutions that would resolve existing class and gender inequalities, these marginalised bodies—being actively 're-engineered' through their everyday labour in the global technological environment—performed their own bodily unreliability. In turn, these marginalised bodies brought into view and kinaesthetically recuperated the tensions inherent in the confusion of organic-machinic boundaries, which were suppressed under such instrumentalist techno-utopianism.

UNRELIABLE HUMAN BODIES

In their novels *Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep?* and *Never Let Me Go*, Dick and Ishiguro show human and android or clone bodies to be hunting, stalking, and shadowing each other. Specifically, they render the kinaesthetic interactions between the moving bodies of the human and the android/clone through the dichotomies of prey-predator and guardian-student respectively, and these double movements—as registered through the double vision that Hayles alludes to—propel their narratives forward. At the same time, Dick and Ishiguro both highlight instances where these human and android/clone bodies act untowardly in their prescribed roles in these dichotomies—that is to say, these

⁶¹ Haraway, p. 164.

⁶² Gane, pp. 137-39.

bodies show themselves to be unreliable. Such anomalies in bodily behaviour thus recuperate the tensions inherent in the confusion of organic-machinic boundaries that are suppressed under instrumentalist techno-utopianism—in turn, registering ambivalence in the techno-utopias that these two novels are set in. I will proceed to examine *Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep?* first.

Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep? is set in a post-apocalyptic world where World War Terminus has left most of Earth's surface contaminated with radioactive dust. This fallout has decimated most of the world's animal species, rendering genuine animals rare and expensive to own, while also opening up a burgeoning market for electric animals (p. 5). This dangerous living environment has also expedited the extraterrestrial emigration of human beings that was underway even before the war, such that only thousands remain on the planet (p. 12). Since emigration is now considered to be the logical mode of action that 'every regular [human]' should undertake for the survival of the human race, those who choose to stay on Earth become seen as being at best, irrational, and at worst, aberrant. In other words, these human beings on Earth become marginalised by their own kind for their biological unreliability—which implies that their bodies are ineffective as tools and instruments. For they are human bodies that run the daily risk of being 'classed as biologically unacceptable, a menace to the pristine heredity of the race' (p. 12)—at which point they become derogatorily known as 'specials' or 'chickenheads' (p. 14) and are barred from emigrating to any off-world colonies for a new life (p. 129).

Accordingly, the deteriorating bodies of the human protagonists of Dick's novel—bounty hunter Rick Deckard and truck driver for an electric animal repair firm John Isidore—who are amongst those remaining on Earth demonstrate their unreliability in degrees. Monthly medical checkups confirm Deckard as a 'regular', but he is ever wary of the fact that as long as he fails to emigrate, he is liable to be classed as a special from living long term amid the radioactive dust that 'deranged minds and genetic properties' (p. 5). On his end, Isidore has already been classified as a special for over a year due to his distorted genes—'a freak generated by his inept sensory apparatus' (p. 15). In fact, Isidore's body is so unreliable that he cannot distinguish between an organic being and an android, which we see in his mistaking a real, dying cat for a malfunctioning, electric one (p. 63) and more crucially, in his later interactions with Pris Stratton, an android.

This unreliability of the organic, human body, then, destabilises the very category of what being human constitutes. For this bodily unreliability begins to destabilise the earlier referenced techno-utopian ideology of ‘pristine heredity’ that has been mobilised to sort out the strong from the weak for optimum survival in an unstable world, showing it to be instrumental in perpetuating a techno-dystopia instead.

This techno-utopian ideology of pristine heredity is further complicated through the figure of the ‘organic android’ (p. 12). Confusing the boundaries between the organic and the machinic, the ‘new flesh’ of the organic android inhabits the contradictory tensions of the destructiveness of technological warfare versus postwar technologies that were used to repair war-torn bodies:

By the end of World War II it was very clear that the mechanization of the human, the vitalization of the machine, and the integration of both into cybernetics was producing a whole range of informational disciplines, fantasies, and practices that transgressed the machinic-organic border. This marks a major transition from a world where distinctions between human and tool, human and machine, living and dead, organic and inorganic, present and distant, natural and artificial seemed clear (even if they really weren’t) to the present, where all of these distinctions seem plastic, if not ludicrous.⁶³

Just as most cyborg technologies ‘have military origins, although civilian medical research has become almost as important a source’⁶⁴, the concept of reliability engineering, as it is being applied in systems and process engineering industries, also originated from a military application⁶⁵. In this sense, the reliability of the human body arguably becomes important to the postwar ideology of pristine heredity in Dick’s novel.

Following on from this point, it is also through the figure of the android that Dick suggests that the reliable human body not only becomes idealised, but also becomes a global commodity. Technology is the tool that enables this global commoditisation of the reliable human body, so that the extraterrestrial migration

⁶³ Chris Hables Gray, Steven Mentor and Heidi J. Figueroa-Sarriera, ‘Cyborgology: Constructing the Knowledge of Cybernetic Organisms’, in *The Cyborg Handbook*, ed. by Chris Hables Gray, Steven Mentor and Heidi J. Figueroa-Sarriera (New York and London: Routledge, 1995), pp. 1-14 (p. 5).

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 3.

⁶⁵ Stapelberg, p. 46.

of more reliable and thus elite human bodies is kept up for the building of a techno-utopia beyond a contaminated Earth:

a weapon of war, the Synthetic Freedom Fighter, had been modified; able to function on an alien world the humanoid robot—strictly speaking, the organic android—had become the mobile donkey engine of the colonization program. Under UN law each emigrant automatically received possession of an android subtype of his choice, and by 1990, the variety of subtypes passed all understanding, in the manner of American automobiles of the 1960s.

(p. 12)

The ‘lively processes of technological modification, then, sells the promise of a techno-utopian world where all bodies not only remain reliable, but also become self-reliant in new alien environments.’⁶⁶ In these new habitats—which are also suggestive of the technologically livelier world we live in today—the self-reliant and self-regulatory body would universally ‘leave man free to explore, to create, to think, and to feel’, and not keep the organic body ‘a slave to the machine’⁶⁷.

Dick, however, uncovers the tensions underlying techno-utopianism by showing the unreliability of the android. This unreliability is performed kinaesthetically, as exemplified by the illegal migration of androids to Earth, which, indeed, is such a frequent occurrence that Deckard’s livelihood depends on it (p. 22). These willful acts of escapes by these androids from their indentured labour in the extraterrestrial settlements reinforce the predator-prey mentality that Deckard depends on to justify his job to himself, since for these escapes to be facilitated, the androids kill their human owners (p. 25). For Deckard, the android is the predator—‘Evidently the humanoid robot constituted a solitary predator’ (p. 24)—and himself the human prey. This kinaesthetic sense

⁶⁶ It is worth noting that the word ‘cyborg’ was first coined by American scientists Manfred E. Clynes and Nathan S. Kline in the context of space exploration. Manfred E. Clynes and Nathan S. Kline, ‘Cyborgs and Space’, in *The Cyborg Handbook*, ed. by Chris Hables Gray, Steven Mentor and Heidi J. Figueroa-Sarriera, pp. 29-33 (p. 31). In the contemporary era, techno-utopianism can also be seen in the global drive to find new viable planets for habitation, as seen in this comment by Paul Hertz, the Astrophysics Division Director at NASA Headquarters in Washington: ‘NASA congratulates ESO on the discovery of this intriguing planet that has captured the hopes and the imagination of the world. [...] We look forward to learning more about the planet, whether it holds ingredients that could make it suitable for life.’ Pat Brennan, ‘ESO Discovers Earth-Size Planet in Habitable Zone of Nearest Star’, *NASA*, 24 August 2016 <<https://www.nasa.gov/feature/jpl/eso-discovers-earth-size-planet-in-habitable-zone-of-nearest-star>> [accessed 18 May 2017] (para. 3 of 25).

⁶⁷ Clynes and Kline, p. 31.

of his marginality in this relationship with artificially intelligent technologies conversely spurs Deckard on to overstretch his own bodily capabilities and physically ‘re-engineer’ his body, carrying out the unprecedented feat of hunting down and eliminating or ‘retiring’ six androids in one day to prove his own reliability as a bounty hunter and human predator (p. 181), thus enabling him to stay useful as a ‘reliable human body’—that is, as an well-functioning instrument—in this techno-utopia.

Deckard’s ultimate admission of his subconscious fear of never having any more androids to retire, however—‘There’ll be more andys to retire; my career isn’t over; I haven’t retired the last andy in existence. Maybe that’s what it is, he thought. I’m afraid there aren’t any more’ (p. 184)—keeps this predator-prey relation between the human and the android in tension. For if Deckard is too reliable in his job, such that all illegal androids are retired, this would spell his own retirement and show him to be of no further use as a tool to the world system, thus confirming his marginal status in his own race as a human being on Earth. Dick shows Deckard to be trapped in the system, in a Catch-22 situation wherein, in a sense, if he wants to keep being useful in his ‘race against the machine’⁶⁸ (to adapt the title of Erik Brynjolfsson and Andrew McAfee’s book), he has to use his body economically—thus perpetuating the configuration of the reliable human body as tool and commodity. The unreliability of the android—configured as Deckard’s predator because it dares to move outside of its position as slave to its human master—thus reveals Deckard’s own enslavement and marginality under the capitalist machinations of an instrumentalist techno-utopianism that banks on an understanding of the body as ‘an object for control and mastery rather than as an intrinsic part of the self’⁶⁹.

Yet Dick does suggest a mode of resistance for Deckard, which we see at the end of the novel. Deckard’s way to resist entanglement with this techno-dystopia from his marginalised position, while also kinaesthetically sustaining his presence in the world, is to choose to fall asleep independently—without the help of the ‘mood organ’ technology—to ‘Long deserved peace’ (p. 192). As such, Deckard is still embedded in this earthly techno-dystopia, but his run-

⁶⁸ Brynjolfsson and McAfee, p. 1.

⁶⁹ Hayles, *How We Became Posthuman: Virtual Bodies in Cybernetics, Literature, and Informatics*, p. 5.

down, sleeping body that is covered in its own devolutionary dust—‘He stretched out on the bed, dust sifting from his clothes and hair onto the white sheet’ (p. 192)—suspends his participation and complicity in its perpetual engineering of his body as a tool of globalised techno-utopianism.

Not only, then, is a long, sustained sleep not an economic use of Deckard’s body, but sleeping also refuses the instrumentalist configuration of the body as an object for control and mastery. Sleeping is Deckard’s kinaesthetic practice of unreliability and resistance wherein he modifies his bodily behaviour, thus enacting a motor decision with ‘motor intentionality’—‘the dynamic engagement of the body in a specific context that invites subjects to effect change’⁷⁰. We do not see the effects of this resistance as yet because Deckard falls asleep at the end of the novel after he has finished his ‘marathon assignment’. However, the realisation that Deckard comes to (through his assignment)—‘That part was worse [...] After I finished. I couldn’t stop because there would be nothing left after I stopped’ (p. 192)—shows his own awakening to the detrimental and violent consequences of the continuous ‘engineering’ of his body as a reliable tool in techno-utopia. In this sense, Deckard’s sleeping can be considered an act of strike that expresses his particular lived experience and resists against global, universal determination of how his body should move. By showing how Deckard becomes alert to the qualities of his acts (to paraphrase Carrie Noland), Dick suggests possibility for change in this world.⁷¹

THE ANDROID COMPANION

At this juncture, I would like to further develop my point about the android’s unreliability as an anomaly in the globalising, techno-utopian practice of pristine heredity in Dick’s novel. This is because the android itself is also caught in this Catch-22 situation that is characterised by the predator-prey dynamic.

In Dick’s projection of the dystopian future that is now our present—Scott does set *Blade Runner* in 2019, just two years from the current moment

⁷⁰ Noland, p. 4.

⁷¹ *Ibid.*, p. 6.

when this thesis is being written—the reliability of the android to perform its original purpose as servant to the human being (therefore also a tool in globalised techno-utopia) is cast under even greater doubt, in light of the invention of the Nexus-6. Designed to replicate the workings of the human body system so well that it already surpasses the human specials in terms of intelligence (p. 23), the Nexus-6 is an advanced android model that is made to be as unreliable as an android servant can be—so long as this aspect of reliability is measured in terms of the android’s adherence to the human-android hierarchy as defined by the master-slave dichotomy such that the android still remains a tool. The Nexus-6’s unreliability, then, is an anomaly in this dichotomy, because this android is designed to be so kinaesthetically aware of, even alive to, its own presence and movement in the world in relation to others, that it can almost reliably mimic ‘empathy’ (p. 23). Empathy is a quality that, up to this point, has been exclusive to the domain of being human, as Deckard notes: ‘An android, no matter how gifted as to pure intellectual capacity, could make no sense out of the fusion which took place routinely among the followers of Mercerism—an experience which he, and virtually everyone else, including subnormal chickenheads, managed with no difficulty’ (p. 24).

With its incredible ability to mimic empathy through bodily responses, the Nexus-6 plasticises the organic-machinic border to such a degree that it radically destabilises the human-android relation and its existing predator-prey dynamic. This destabilisation can be seen particularly in the scene where Deckard tests the android Rachael Rosen. Here we see that, because Rachael produces bodily responses to the questions that Deckard asks (as part of the Voigt-Kampff Empathy Test, a lie-detector technology that Deckard uses in his line of work to distinguish androids from humans) that are so accurate as to be almost indistinguishable from those of human responses, the organic-machinic border becomes so plastic that the lie-detector technology is nearly proven to be obsolete (p. 43). The question of who is the predator and who is the prey also becomes even more unstable, as we begin to see this in examples at different scales of the ‘love’ (p. 177) that rises between Deckard and the android Rachael, or of the ‘friend[ship]’ (p. 126) that emerges between Isidore and androids Pris, Irmgard and Roy Baty, and also the group of androids that Roy Baty congregates to make the trip to Earth (p. 124). These examples show how the organic-

machinic border becomes ever more confused, as human and android bodies come into even closer proximity with one another. The tensions in this confusion of organic-machinic boundaries are also exacerbated by the fact that through its increasing engineered liveliness, the android now holds the promise of being able to enact its own agency, which would radically change the organic character of the pristine heredity of the human race. The growing unreliability of the android thus registers the turning point where techno-utopia becomes what Dick considered to be techno-dystopia: a new reality wherein ‘as the external world becomes more animate, we may find that *we*—the so-called humans—are becoming, and may to a great extent always have been, inanimate in the sense that *we* are led, directed by built-in tropisms, rather than leading’⁷².

In *Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep?*, this sense of humans being led or being engineered by technology is further exemplified in Dick’s suggestion that the criteria for the android’s purpose is changing in a contemporary world where ‘our environment, and I mean our man-made world of machines, artificial constructs, computers, electronic systems, interlinking homeostatic components [...] is becoming alive, or at least quasi-alive, and in ways specifically and fundamentally analogous to ourselves’⁷³. As the human is increasingly confronted with his or her own marginality in this global technological environment, the techno-utopian ideology of pristine heredity would deem that the android now needs to be more of a companion than a servant, and accordingly, its liveliness needs to be ‘tuned up’. This last point is exemplified in the tweaking of the android’s emotional intelligence or its ‘empathy’ (p. 23) function, that nearly renders Deckard obsolete in his job too. Yet this extreme unreliability of the Nexus-6 in serving its old purpose as an indentured servant to human beings is a risk knowingly undertaken by its creator, Eldon Rosen, who claims just to be catering to ‘what the colonists wanted [...] We followed the time-honored principle underlying every commercial venture. If our firm hadn’t made these progressively more human types, other firms in the field would have.’ (p. 43). Dick thus suggests that the increasingly liveliness and unreliability of the android belies the liveliness and unreliability of capitalist speculation.

⁷² Philip K. Dick, ‘The Android and the Human’, in *The Shifting Realities of Philip K. Dick*, ed. by Lawrence Sutin (New York: Pantheon Books, 1995), pp. 183-210 (p. 187).

⁷³ *Ibid.*, p. 183.

Fuelled by capitalist speculation, under the techno-utopian fantasy of pristine heredity, the android is engineered to perform more unreliably, in order to still be a reliable component in the evolving conditions of the global political economy. This is the Catch-22 that the android becomes embroiled in, as long as it is mobilised to perpetuate the globalising, techno-utopian ideology of pristine heredity that weeds out the strong from the weak. This Catch-22 mires the increasingly lively android that has burgeoning kinaesthetic awareness of its place and movements of agency in the world even deeper into the predator-prey dynamic as *both* predator and prey. We see this double positioning of the android—the lively technologised other—in the juxtaposition of Iran’s (Deckard’s wife) sympathetic view of them (‘those poor andys’ (p. 1)) against the bounty hunter Phil Resch’s perspective of them as ‘We’re acting defensively; they’re here on our planet—they’re murderous illegal aliens masquerading as [us]’ (p. 108).

Yet the androids themselves are also beginning to assert their presences, as they trespass Earth and insert themselves innocuously into the population. We see this in the example of Pris and the Batys moving into Isidore’s apartment (p. 124), and in Deckard’s reflection: ‘Over fifty of the T-14 androids as he recalled had made their way by one means or another to Earth, and had not yet been detected for a period in some cases up to an entire year’ (p. 23). Through such bodily performances of unreliability, then, the androids exemplify how the increasing liveliness of technological processes themselves in the contemporary era can inadvertently destabilise globalising, techno-utopian practices that configure technology as always just around the corner, ready to provide sure-fire solutions to existing problems in the global political economy. On his part, however, Dick tended to see even this liveliness of technological processes as a further expression of capitalism’s mutations, as indicated from his generally negative characterisation of androids in his novel (such as Rachael who is shown to emotionally exploit Deckard’s attraction towards her (p. 156), and in his psychopathic portrayal of Roy Baty (p. 131)). As he stated in ‘The Android and the Human’:

Becoming what I call, for lack of a better term, an android, means as I said, to allow oneself to become a means, or to be pounded down, manipulated, made into a means without one's knowledge or consent—the results are the same.⁷⁴

Jason P. Vest identifies this technological cynicism as expressive of postmodernist writing in the post-war period:

The global hegemony of modern capitalism, by wiping out all vestiges of older social systems and modes of productions, contributes to an overall loss in the ability of postmodern subjects to imagine alternatives to the current system, and thus the diminution of utopian thinking after World War II.⁷⁵

As such, despite certain moments where we might view the androids in Dick's novel sympathetically—such as Rachael's final act of pushing Dick's real goat off the edge of the building where he lived (p. 179)—Dick was ultimately concerned with the lived experience of what being human meant:

But no android—and you will recall and realize that by this term I am summing up that which is not human—no android would think to do what a bright-eyed little girl I know did, something a little bizarre, certainly ethically questionable in several ways, at least in any traditional sense, but to me truly human, in that it shows, to me, a spirit of merry defiance, of spirited, although not spiritual, bravery and uniqueness.⁷⁶

And for Dick, the search for the meaning of being human amid our increasingly lively technological environment would mean being kinaesthetically embroiled in the predator-prey dichotomy in tension, being ever alert of the turning point when humans would be led by their technologised other and become inanimate tools, and resisting this moment at every turn of the technological revolution. I will expand on how this alertness of this turning point takes place within the kinaesthetic body in the next section.

This differs from Scott's more sympathetic portrayal of androids and of technology in his film adaptation, *Blade Runner*. Notably, *Blade Runner* ends with Baty breaking down on his own time even as he reaches the end of his

⁷⁴ Dick, 'The Android and the Human', p. 191.

⁷⁵ Jason P. Vest, *The Postmodern Humanism of Philip K. Dick* (Lanham: The Scarecrow Press, 2009), p. xi.

⁷⁶ Dick, 'The Android and the Human', p. 210.

lifespan—a kinaesthetic performance of his unreliability. Crucially though, Scott shows this run-down android body with Deckard looking on, suggesting that even as techno-utopian globalisation uses technological tools to engineer more optimum and artificially intelligent environments for human survival, technology itself, in its inherent unreliability even as it inevitably breaks down, can also derail this techno-utopian fantasy. I will go back to *Blade Runner* at the end of this chapter, when looking at worn-down, machinic bodies.

EMBODIED HUMAN-MACHINIC RELATION

From the previous two sections, we have seen that both the biological devolution of human bodies and the increasing liveliness of the Nexus-6 android—as kinaesthetic performances of unreliability—bring to light the tensions inherent in the confusion of organic-machinic boundaries when posthuman bodies are ‘engineered’ to be well-performing and reliable tools under global techno-utopianism. That these human and android bodies remain marginalised under the instrumentalist, techno-utopian ideology of pristine heredity, despite its purported promise that technology can offer global solutions that are for the benefit of all, enact its suppression of these tensions. These performances of unreliability are the anomalies that Hayles’ concept of functionality does not account for. Although, this is not to say that Hayles does not notice how, in *Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep?*, bodily response cannot be relied upon to distinguish between human and android.

Indeed, Hayles also conducted a reading of Dick’s novel in her book. She observed:

With so much riding on the ‘authentic’ human, the qualities defining it take on special significance. Authenticity does not depend on whether the being in question has been manufactured or born, made of flesh and blood or of electronic circuits. The issue cannot be decided by physiological criteria.⁷⁷

⁷⁷ Hayles, *How We Became Posthuman: Virtual Bodies in Cybernetics, Literature, and Informatics*, p. 163.

Hayles, then, displayed her attentiveness to this bodily unreliability that Dick portrayed in his novel, but she saw this as *psychologically* indicative of the schizophrenic subject as configured under capitalism, whereby ‘schizophrenia is not a psychological aberration but the normal condition of the subject’⁷⁸. And while Dick does refer to the androids as displaying schizophrenic behaviour in *Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep?* (p. 30), I would like to focus on how Hayles’ interpretation of the schizophrenic behaviour of the androids hinged upon her reading of Dick’s novel as ‘leap[ing] over the importance of embodiment’⁷⁹.

Regarding what she saw as Dick’s leap over the importance of embodiment, Hayles wrote:

His fiction displays the same orientation, for it shows almost no interest in how intelligent machines are constructed, dismissing the issue with a few words of hand-waving ‘explanations’ about homeostatic mechanisms. The important point for Dick is not how intelligent machines are built but that they could be build. Descriptions of bodies (except those of women, where the bodies serve as sexual markers) also rarely appear in Dick’s fiction. The emphasis falls almost entirely on perception and thinking.⁸⁰

This is where my reading differs from Hayles’. As I have argued in the previous sections of this chapter and will go on to argue below, Dick does show kinaesthetic awareness of the tensions underlying the relation between body and technology in an embodied sense. Hayles’ assumption that Dick shows no interest in how intelligent machines are constructed is overly restricted by her definition of this interest in terms of cybernetic theory. But I argue that it is precisely in Dick’s portrayal of this perpetual performance of unreliability through bodies—human and android—that the tensions inherent in the confusion of organic-machinic boundaries are recuperated. In this kinaesthetic recuperation of these tensions that a capitalist, instrumentalist techno-utopianism suppresses, Dick tracks the radical shift in contemporary modes of embodiment from being enfleshed in organic, human corporeality to the artificially intelligent positioning of oneself as a cognitive subject being instantiated in a biological substrate. This

⁷⁸ Hayles, *How We Became Posthuman: Virtual Bodies in Cybernetics, Literature, and Informatics*, p. 167.

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 163.

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 163.

shift in modes of embodiment is where a sense of schizophrenia arises in Dick's novel.

Furthermore, Dick's consistent references to Deckard's bodily state as he chases after the androids on this 'marathon assignment' (p. 191) are all kinaesthetic indicators of Dick's interest in how intelligent machines are constructed. Dick's registration of Deckard's bodily state can be seen in references to Deckard's 'stiff leg muscles' (p. 139), his fatigue (p. 181), 'his whole aching body' (p. 183), his constant calculation of how much bodily energy he has remaining in him to chase the androids ('Two andys together—this isn't a practical question. I probably *can't* retire them, he realized. Even if I try; I'm too tired and too much has happened today' (p. 142)), and Deckard's alertness to his everyday devolution into a special as mentioned earlier in the chapter. Dick's interest in the engineering of the 'new flesh'—to recall Haraway's phrase—of intelligent machines necessarily manifests in relation to Deckard's and Isidore's own bodily performances, because it is only through these human bodies that Dick can kinaesthetically register the bodily tensions that are suppressed under the techno-utopian ideology of pristine heredity. As such, I find Dick's narrative, contrary to Hayles' reading, to be very much embodied in human-machinic materiality. For it is through such kinaesthetic awareness of the radical changes in human corporeality that technological advancements enabled in the postwar period, that Dick shows how the human body in its burgeoning relationship with increasingly lively technologies becomes aware of its own bodily unreliability. In another sense, it is the physical unreliability of Deckard's and Isidore's human bodies as they experience their bodies-in-process that make them the unreliable and perhaps 'schizophrenic' subjects of contemporary techno-utopia who can only account for their own particular lived experiences and not those of the increasingly lively androids.

With its more sympathetic portrayal of the androids, however, *Blade Runner* suggests that it is also important to register technological liveliness as kinaesthetically reshaping our lived experience of the world, since global technological advancements have revised contemporary modes of embodiment and we live in increasingly technologically lively environments since Dick's novel. As Scott suggests, the breaking down of android bodies on their own time

suggest that technological processes, as they become progressively livelier, can also recuperate the tensions in confusion of organic-machinic boundaries that have been suppressed under instrumentalist techno-utopianism, and resist techno-utopian co-option through their inherent unreliability. I will come back to this later in the chapter.

CLONE AGITATIONS

Ishiguro's novel *Never Let Me Go* offers an interesting and contemporary take on the lived experience of globalised techno-utopia as expressed through the liveliness of artificially intelligent technology. The novel depicts an 'alternative history'⁸³ where clones have been developed to upkeep the level of human health in a post-war world where medical advances have made it impossible to turn back time:

There was no way to reverse the process. How can you ask a world that has come to regard cancer as curable, how can you ask such a world to put away that cure, to go back to the dark days? There was no going back. (pp. 257-58)

In particular, Ishiguro's choice of a female clone as the narrator of this alternative history puts forward a new kind of 'reliable narrator' whose technologically engineered body suppresses techno-utopian ambivalence. Just as Deckard's and Isidore's unreliable human bodies physically configured their unreliable accounts of techno-utopia, then, Kathy's reliability as a narrator of her lived experience of this world is performed through her technologised body. After all, her body, being created from technology, is designed to be reliable and to function at optimum health so that her organs can eventually be transplanted into unreliable and unhealthy human bodies that are on the verge of succumbing to potentially fatal illnesses such as 'cancer, motor neurone disease, heart disease' (p. 258).

⁸³ 'Interview with Kazuo Ishiguro', *Readers Read*, October 2005
<<http://www.writerswrite.com/books/interview-with-kazuo-ishiguro-100120051>> [accessed 5 May 2017] (para. 9 of 26).

Kathy is a distinctive choice for a narrator considering Ishiguro's frequent employment of unreliable narrators in his other novels such as *The Remains of the Day* (1989), *An Artist of the Floating World* (1986), and *A Pale View of Hills* (1982), which has become his literary trademark of sorts. In an interview, when he is asked about the perceived reliability of Kathy as compared to his previous narrators in other novels, Ishiguro states:

in the past, my narrators were unreliable, not because they were lunatics, but because they were ordinarily self-deceiving. When they looked back over their failed lives, they found it hard to see things in an entirely straight way. Self-deception of that sort is common to most of us, and I really wanted to explore this theme in my earlier books. But *Never Let Me Go* isn't concerned with that kind of self-deception. So I needed my narrator to be different. An unreliable narrator here would just have got in the way.⁸⁴

As Ishiguro's response suggests, the reliability of Kathy's technologised body signifies her lack of self-deception with regard to her purpose in building a contemporary, globalised techno-utopia and her place of marginality in this world. Rebecca Suter observes that '[Kathy's] destiny was from the beginning determined by forces beyond her control, and her story was silenced by those same forces'⁸⁵. In terms of bodily kinaesthesia, Kathy's body is 'engineered' as a reliable tool to sustain the human race on a global scale through organ transplantation. Her body—as the manifestation of artificial intelligence in a biological substrate—serves the promise of a techno-utopian world where technology is assumed never to fail to arrive, because clones can always be engineered and made for medical supply.

Kathy and her fellow clones' general lack of surprise and passivity when their inevitable fate is revealed to them by a well-meaning human guardian—as shown by their 'puzzled, uncomfortable faces' (p. 80)—further gestures through the movements of their technologically reliable bodies towards how this techno-utopian ideology requires and relies on technology to be configured only as an inanimate instrument under human hands. For Ishiguro shows us that, to keep up the techno-utopian idea of the self-reliant human race, the clones are themselves

⁸⁴ 'Interview with Kazuo Ishiguro' (para. 12).

⁸⁵ Rebecca Suter, 'Untold and Unlived Lives in Kazuo Ishiguro's *Never Let Me Go*: A Response to Burkhard Niederhoff', *Connotations*, 21.2-3 (2011/2012), 397-406 (p. 405).

‘engineered’ through certain practices that keep them marginalised in relation to organic, human bodies. This techno-utopian idea of the self-reliant human body is kept up by rendering the clone bodies as different and inorganic: ‘you weren’t really like us. That you were less than human, so it didn’t matter’ (p. 258). Clone bodies are also kept inanimate by rendering them as disembodied organs—‘Shadowy objects in test tubes’—that ‘existed only to supply medical science’ (p. 256).

By perpetuating the image of Kathy and her fellow clones only as inanimate bodily deposits, the clone technological discourse in *Never let Me Go* keeps close to the image of the dismantled post-war body that is in desperate need of being put back together. In this sense, technology becomes configured as an enabling force that humans can rely on, to re-engineer the liveliness of the organic body that was undone by the violence of war. But in this scenario, the liveliness of technology itself necessarily remains marginal to the organic, and the reliable organic body, like in *Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep?*, is valorised. This is the instrumentalism of the techno-utopianism in *Never Let Me Go*, whereby the liveliness of technology only serves to animate human progress and to re-tool the organic body for long-term survival.

However, it is also through the liveliness of technology that Ishiguro suggests anomalies within and possibilities for resistance against such instrumentalist techno-utopianism. In *Never Let Me Go*, clones are shown to move against their stated objectives as donors through their bodies. For one, through Kathy’s perspective as a carer—a carer is a clone who takes care of other clones that are in the process of donating their organs to humans—we see that the clones become ‘agitated’ (p. 3) as they go through the donation process. This is shown particularly in the instance where Kathy describes the agitated bodily motions of her friend, Ruth, who had just gone through her second donation and was not likely to survive for long beyond it:

I took one glance at her in that hospital bed under the dull light and recognised the look on her face, which I’d seen on donors often enough before. It was like she was willing her eyes to see right inside herself, so she could patrol and marshal all the better the separate areas of pain in her body [...] I pulled up a chair and sat with her hand in both of mine, squeezing whenever another flood of pain made her twist away from me [...] she was twisting herself in a way that seemed scarily unnatural
(pp. 231-32)

These bodily agitations show how clone bodies enact their own kinaesthetic practices of unreliability that destabilise their techno-utopian configuration as mere medical supply. For these bodily agitations record the tensions underlying this donation process, whereby as the clone body is dismantled and its body parts are taken for the global use and survival of organic, elite human bodies, the clone donor body itself is progressively emptied out without being replenished or reconstructed on its end.

Indeed, these agitations of the emptying clone donor body that is not reconstructed on its end gestures towards the contemporary questions that Janet Radcliffe Richards raises in her book *The Ethics of Transplants: Why Careless Thought Costs Lives* (2012) about how medical practitioners can identify if a potential donor is dead, in light of the fact that modern technologies such as the mechanical ventilator complicate the process of distinguishing physiological signs of death.⁸⁶ As the mechanical ventilator works off the basic idea of the intensive care unit where ‘the failing parts of the system are taken over artificially, in the hope that if the body can be helped through the crisis it will eventually recover enough to carry on alone’, the question of whether a patient body can still be considered alive, particularly in the case of patients identified as being in a state of *coma dépassé* (‘beyond coma’) or brain-death, becomes ambivalent.⁸⁷ With the advent of organ transplant technologies, this question is further complicated by the urgency of determining if and when we can intervene and retrieve these organs (while they are still working reliably) for other bodies that need them. Richards argues that ‘The problem is no longer about certainty of irreversibility, but about *which elements* of the whole organism need to have gone irreversibly before the person is really dead’⁸⁸. She also adds that this is no longer a question that medical science can answer—‘the way you understand the question of whether the person on the ventilator is dead depends on your world view’⁸⁹.

In this sense, the agitations of the clone donor bodies in *Never Let Me Go* recuperate these tensions that, as Richards points out, an instrumentalist

⁸⁶ Janet Radcliffe Richards, *The Ethics of Transplants: Why Careless Thought Costs Lives* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), pp. 222-23.

⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 223.

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 227.

⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 231.

understanding of bodies and of technologies as mere medical tools suppresses. The agitations of these clone donor bodies express their painful, particular, lived experiences of techno-utopia, which resist their being configured as a kind of inanimate life-support for other organic bodies deemed more ‘alive’ than they are and recuperate the ‘uneas[e] about what is going on when organs are taken from bodies that seem to show a great many signs of life’⁹⁰. These agitated clone donor bodies exemplify ‘somatic modes of attention’ that alert the humans in *Never Let Me Go* to the qualities of their acts.⁹¹ As such, these agitations of clone donor bodies challenge the claim of contemporary techno-utopianism that technology can provide all-encompassing solutions, by tensely registering how this delimits liveliness to a conception of the ‘organic wholeness’⁹² of bodies. At the same time, as technological anomalies, these agitations of clone bodies in Ishiguro’s novel also begin to suggest how the unexpected liveliness of technological processes themselves gesturally resists techno-utopian co-option.

To get a sense of how technological liveliness has its own agency and can enact resistance with ‘motor intentionality’—since Ishiguro presents these agitations as involuntary bodily responses—we can consider Kathy’s own bodily behaviour and practices as a potential donor. On her end, Kathy also performs movements of unreliability that destabilise her own purpose as a donor. This can be seen in her work as a carer for twelve years—considered to be an exceptionally long time for a clone (p. 3). There is an underlying ambivalence to Kathy’s work as a carer, because her reliable performance in this job can be seen to exemplify her complicity in this techno-utopia. As she admits, the human doctors and nurses want her to continue because ‘they’ve been pleased with my work [...] My donors have always tended to do much better than expected. Their recovery times have been impressive, and hardly any of them have been classified as “agitated”, even before fourth donation’ (p. 3).

However, it is also in her prolonged reliable performance that Kathy disrupts this techno-utopia. For at thirty-one years old (p. 3), she begins to outlast her purpose as a donor, that is, she starts to be unreliable. In particular, Kathy’s unreliability is shown in the wear and tear of her body from her work, as her

⁹⁰ Richards, p. 232.

⁹¹ Noland, p. 6.

⁹² Haraway, p. 150.

clone lover, Tommy, observes: ‘But all this rushing about you do. All this getting exhausted and being by yourself. I’ve been watching you. It’s wearing you out.’ (p. 277) Kathy also poignantly states at the beginning of the novel: ‘Carers aren’t machines. You try and do your best for every donor, but in the end, it wears you down. You don’t have unlimited patience and energy’ (p. 4). The wear and tear of Kathy’s body, then, dismantles the commoditised image of the reliable technologised body through its visible signs of aging. This wear and tear kinaesthetically refuses the techno-utopian co-option of the liveliness of technology, not only by showing that technology cannot always sustain its promise of re-engineering the body for optimum survival, but also that technology can ‘stretch’ its own determined lifespan. In this sense, technology is shown to be inherently unreliable, and this ‘stretching’ of her determined lifespan is Kathy’s modification of the bodily behaviour of the clone that is engineered to be reliable as inanimate medical supply, showing her to be enacting a motor decision with motor intentionality.

To get a more intimate sense of how this ‘stretching’ of one’s determined lifespan works in kinaesthetic terms of the body-in-process, we can consider *Blade Runner*. In *Blade Runner*, Scott gestures to this inherent unreliability of technology in the figure of the android Roy Baty. Near the end of the film, we are shown Baty and Deckard chasing each other through a decrepit building—kinaesthetically performing the predator-prey dichotomy—until Baty finally breaks down due to his lifespan expiring. Throughout the chase scene, Scott reminds us that Baty is not the technologised figure of invincibility that a techno-utopian ideology of pristine heredity buoys up, by showing Baty to be ‘tuning’ or ‘repairing’ his failing body with a tool during the chase, in order to even keep himself in his final chase against the human Deckard. Like Kathy, the fact that Baty tunes up his failing body is in itself an act of unreliability wherein he modifies his behaviour—manipulating the time frame within which he is supposed to break down—so as to dynamically engage his body in a specific context to invite subjects to effect change, thus exemplifying ‘motor intentionality’. Through Baty’s act of ‘repairing’ his body, then, Scott captures the unreliability of technology and its final act of refusing to be complicit in the globalising, techno-utopian practices that both constructs and suppresses it.

A MOVING ARCHIVE

In the previous section, I have argued that Ishiguro and Scott show in their respective ways how technology itself, in its lively unreliability, resists techno-utopian co-option with motor intentionality. This can be seen in the bodily agitations of clone donors, in Kathy's visible signs of wear and tear, and in Baty's tuning of himself. I recognise that for such practices to be considered resistance, this might be contentious since all these embodied artificial intelligences ultimately break down. However, it is through these examples that both Ishiguro and Scott begin to challenge us to expand our conception of agency, particular in a posthuman context. To show how this works, I would first like to extend my analysis of Baty's final act of 'stretching' his determined lifespan.

In the film, we see that Baty's act of 'stretching' his determined lifespan allows him to briefly tell Deckard of his memories and his experiences beyond Earth, before breaking down. This short monologue in this iconic scene—colloquially known as the 'Tears in Rain' monologue—is emitted through Baty's last 'breath' before his technologised body expires. This monologue visibly affects Deckard, because prior to it, Deckard had just learnt what it felt like to be marginalised in techno-utopia—Baty says to him: 'Quite an experience to live in fear, isn't it? That's what it is to be a slave.' As Baty goes on to tell Deckard of his own memories, in the full knowledge that his body is going to expire, the android is calm and accepts his fate, while the human Deckard is visibly unsettled.

The difference in Baty's and Deckard's responses as to the knowledge of their roles in techno-utopia suggests their different understanding of agency. I contend that underlying this different understanding of agency is a perspective shift, which I will elaborate more by looking at Kathy's own artificially intelligent performance of memory. But Baty's act of delivering his 'Tears in Rain' monologue with his final breath, which shows agency and involves the artificially intelligent performance of memory, has begun to transform Deckard's perspective of his role in the human-machinic relationship. Baty has intentionally used his body to enact a somatic mode of attention that alerts the former to the

qualities of his acts as a blade runner in this techno-utopia. This shift in Deckard's perspective is the effect of Baty's resistance.

To further understand the implications of this shift of perspective through the artificially intelligent performance of memory, we can look at Kathy. Near the end of *Never Let Me Go*, before her own body becomes broken down for organ donation, we see that Kathy finds consolation in her memories of her 'childhood' (p. 263) at Hailsham, her boarding school. She states:

Once I'm able to have a quieter life, in whichever centre they send me to, I'll have Hailsham with me, safely in my head, and that'll be something no one can take away.

(p. 281)

At the point when she makes this statement, Kathy is fully realised as a 'reliable narrator'. That is to say, the reliability of her technologised body gestures towards the absolute reliability of the fact that she will inevitably be broken down for organ donation.

Yet Kathy is calm in the face of this fact and ostensibly soothed just by her memories. Kathy's calmness is generated through a quiet confidence regarding the independence of her memories. For these memories are created through Kathy's own embodied experiences with other clone bodies and also those of the human guardians at Hailsham that *Never Let Me Go* presents in entirety, gesturing towards a 'moving archive'⁹⁹ that she dynamically inhabits in her body.

To get a kinaesthetic sense of how this moving archive is constructed through moving bodies, we can consider Sarah Whatley's analysis of British choreographer Siobhan Davies' dynamic construction of a digital archive of and through the dancing body. Whatley details how this moving archive is generated through dancing bodies past and present:

[Davies] describes how dancers took shards of material from different dancers [...] initially feeling removed, retaining a distance from them, but gradually those dancers and their dance 'came into them', creating a relationship of curiosity, finding out what it does to their own dancing, meaning that each dancer becomes a 'physical library'. Glimpses of past

⁹⁹ Sarah Whatley, 'Digital inscriptions and the dancing body: Expanding territories through and with the archive', *Choreographic Practices*, 5.1 (2014), 121-38 (p. 130).

choreographies and voices from Davies' history infuse the performance, seeping into the room, like vibrations from the past. [...] They inhabit the gallery and add to the collective experience of the current dancers.

This 'memory space' stimulates thought about how we access feelings, sensations and memories that reside in the body and resurface through the body in different ways. At the same time this moving archive comprises more than a century of experience when the dancers' years of dancing are added together. It is full with the unexpected, unintended, surprising and unforeseen that characterizes any preternatural performance event and seems to provide a tangible sense of the thinking and activity that coexists in a dance work and that escapes the series of films, images and words that comprises the determined 'boxed in' objects of an archive.¹⁰⁰

Whatley's last point about 'the unexpected, unintended, surprising and unforeseen that [...] seems to provide a tangible sense of the thinking and activity that coexists in a dance work and that escapes the series of films, images and words that comprises the determined "boxed in" objects of an archive', then, is suggestive of how Kathy's own sense of independence is generated through the moving archive that she 'engineers' and constructs in relation with other clone and human bodies and that she now inhabits in her own body.

Indeed, the independence of Kathy's moving archive imbues her with a kind of bodily strength and resolve that holds her worn-down body together and keeps it going until its inevitable point of expiry:

I was talking to one of my donors a few days ago who was complaining about how memories, even your most precious ones, fade surprisingly quickly. But I don't go along with that. The memories I value most, I don't see them ever fading. I lost Ruth, then I lost Tommy, but I won't lose my memories of them.

(p. 280)

Kathy's performance of calmness in this context of her independence thus becomes a bodily performance of unreliability. Her calmness resists rather than perpetuates a techno-utopian, inanimate configuration of her body, being rooted in the moving archive that she independently inhabits in her body.

Kathy's calm response to her fate as showing her unreliability and agency might be contentious. Indeed, critics have seen Kathy's calmness as unpromising of resistance in light of her 'reliable' knowledge of her inevitable fate, variously

¹⁰⁰ Whatley, p. 130.

describing her as being ‘brain-washed’¹⁰¹, ‘horribly indoctrinated’¹⁰², and ‘personality-challenged’¹⁰³. But these critics do not acknowledge Kathy’s determined choice to hold onto her memories, which express her lived experience of the world, as a form of agency and resistance. For a clone whose sole purpose in the techno-utopian world of *Never Let Me Go* is to be engineered and instrumentalised as a tool and medical supply for human survival, Kathy’s performance of memory indicates her unreliability in and resistance against her role. As I will go on to show, this artificially intelligent performance of memory involves that perspective shift of the human-machinic relationship mentioned earlier.

We see that the moving archive that Kathy inhabits in her body is deeply characterised by unreliability. Ishiguro shows Hailsham itself to be an anomaly in the techno-utopian world of *Never Let Me Go*, where clones are configured as students and humans as guardians—a dichotomy that recognises the blurred boundaries between the organic and the machinic but also forwards a relationship of responsibility that indicates this perspective shift and challenges techno-utopian instrumentalism. Through the contradictory lessons that the clone students receive about their bodies, for instance, the guardians at Hailsham consistently gesture towards tensions inherent in the confusion of organic-machinic boundaries. As Kathy recounts:

there was the whole business about our not being able to have babies. Miss Emily used to give a lot of the sex lectures herself, and I remember once, she brought in a life-size skeleton through various contortions, thrusting her pointer around without the slightest self-consciousness. She was going through all the nuts and bolts of how you did it, what went in where, the different variations, like this was still Geography. Then suddenly, with the skeleton in an obscene heap on the desktop, she turned away and began telling us how we had to be careful *who* we had sex with. Not just because of the diseases, but because, she said, ‘sex affects emotions in ways you’d never expect’. We had to be extremely careful

¹⁰¹ Andrew Barrow, ‘Never Let Me Go by Kazuo Ishiguro: Artist of a floating world’, *Independent*, 25 February 2000 <<http://www.independent.co.uk/arts-entertainment/books/reviews/never-let-me-go-by-kazuo-ishiguro-746328.html>> [accessed 18 May 2017] (para. 12 of 17).

¹⁰² Theo Tait, ‘A sinister harvest’, *The Telegraph*, 13 March 2005 <<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/culture/books/3638242/A-sinister-harvest.html>> [accessed 18 May 2017] (para. 8 of 9).

¹⁰³ Sarah Kerr, “‘Never Let Me Go’: When They Were Orphans”, *The New York Times*, 17 April 2005 <<http://www.nytimes.com/2005/04/17/books/review/never-let-me-go-when-they-were-orphans.html>> [accessed 18 May 2017] (para. 6 of 9).

about having sex in the outside world, especially with people who weren't students, because out there sex meant all sorts of things. Out there people were even fighting and killing each other over who had sex with whom [...] because the people out there were different from us students: they could have babies from sex. [...] And even though, as we knew, it was completely impossible for any of us to have babies, out there, we had to behave like them. We had to respect the rules and treat sex as something pretty special.

Miss Emily's lecture that day was typical of what I'm talking about. We'd be focusing on sex, and then the other stuff would creep in. I suppose that was all part of how we came to be 'told and not told'.

(pp. 81-82)

We see, then, that Hailsham is a site where unreliability is actively fostered through the bodily interactions between human guardians and student clones as their education is shaped. In other words, there is a burgeoning shift in the human guardians' perspective of their own relationship with technology as they interact with their student clones—this affects how they teach the clones, which in turn affects how the clones themselves eventually make sense of their own lived experiences of techno-utopia. To use Hayles' term (as mentioned earlier), the educational practices of the human guardians are informed by their recognition of the 'relation' between human and machine, where humans and clones in the world of *Never Let Me Go* are all cyborgs 'not in the merely superficial sense of combining flesh and wires, but in the more profound sense of being human-technology symbionts: thinking and reasoning systems whose minds and selves are spread across biological brain and non-biological circuitry'¹⁰⁴.

Along these lines, these guardian-student interactions reflect the understanding that as we live in increasingly technologically lively environments in the contemporary era, 'cognition is a systemic activity distributed throughout the environment and actuated by a variety of actors, only some of which are human'¹⁰⁵. Hayles points out:

¹⁰⁴ Andy Clark, 'Natural Born Cyborgs?', *Edge*, 28 December 2000
<www.edge.org/3rd_culture/clark/clark_index.html> [accessed 8 August 2018]. Cited in Hayles, 'Flesh and Metal: Reconfiguring the Mindbody in Virtual Environments', p. 302.

¹⁰⁵ Hayles, 'Flesh and Metal: Reconfiguring the Mindbody in Virtual Environments', p. 303.

Instead of the Cartesian subject who begins by cutting himself off from his environment and visualising his thinking presence as the one thing he cannot doubt, the human who inhabits the information-rich environments of contemporary technological societies knows that the dynamic and fluctuating boundaries of her embodied cognitions develop in relation to other cognizing agents embedded throughout the environment, among which the most powerful are intelligent machines.¹⁰⁶

This is the perspective shift undercutting lived experiences of a posthuman world. In turn, because Hailsham fosters this sense of unreliability through their pedagogical practices and through the guardian-student relationship, Kathy is able to unlearn her ‘reliability’ as existing merely as an organ donor and to choose her own independent response to her situation. Kathy’s choice to keep ‘engineering’ her memories of Hailsham—that is, her moving archive within her body—which helps her ‘stretch’ out her determined lifespan and calmly face the reality of her ‘death’ thus exemplifies her resistance against her body being determined as a tool on a global scale, wherein she modifies her bodily behaviour and enacts a motor decision with motor intentionality.

We do not see the effects of Kathy’s resistance in *Never Let Me Go*—beyond an instance where she ‘transplants’ her memories into one of her clone donor patients—because this was not Ishiguro’s intention for his novel. In another interview, Ishiguro has stated:

I was never interested in looking at that story of brave slaves that rebelled and escaped. I like those stories; I think there are many of those stories both in film and in book. I’m fascinated by the extent to which people don’t run away, and I think if you look around us, that is the remarkable fact—how much we accept what fate has given us. Sometimes it’s just passivity, sometimes it’s just simply *perspective* (italics mine). We don’t have the perspective to think about running away. And ultimately I suppose as I suggested [...] I was looking for a metaphor for how we face mortality. And we can’t really escape from that; we can’t escape from the fact that we’ve only got a limited amount of time. We try, you know, we try and tell ourselves stories, we have religion, we try to do it with children or with our achievements outliving us, but ultimately it’s very difficult to escape. So I wasn’t wanting to look at a story about escape. I was wanting to look at how we accept our fate.¹⁰⁷

¹⁰⁶ Hayles, ‘Flesh and Metal: Reconfiguring the Mindbody in Virtual Environments’, p. 303.

¹⁰⁷ ‘Kazuo Ishiguro discusses his intention behind writing the novel, *Never Let Me Go*’, *Film Independent*, 10 September 2010 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_jCB59pPG7k&t=123s> [accessed 3 August 2018].

This might sound opposite to conventional understandings of agency and resistance, but I argue that in a posthuman, techno-utopian context, Kathy's act *is* resistance. As Erynn Masi de Casanova and Afshan Jafar remind us, context matters for understanding embodied resistance.¹⁰⁸

The context is that contemporary techno-utopian practices that celebrate the liberal human subject perpetuate 'fantasies of unlimited power and disembodied immortality', which in turn marginalise certain other people in the world. Against such practices that are 'so deeply entwined with projects of domination and oppression', as mentioned earlier, Hayles reminds us that it is important to forward:

a version of the posthuman that embraces the possibilities of information technologies without being seduced by fantasies of unlimited power and disembodied immortality, that recognizes and celebrates finitude as a condition of human being, and that understands human life is embedded in a material world of great complexity, one on which we depend for our continued survival.¹⁰⁹

Kathy's act of engineering her moving archive 'recognizes and celebrates finitude as a condition of human being', as the act itself is a result of her education at Hailsham that was informed by an understanding of the 'relation' between human and machine. In other words, Kathy's resistance practice involves her kinaesthetically 'transforming untrammelled free will into a recognition that agency is always relational and distributed, and correcting an over-emphasis on consciousness to a more accurate view of cognition as embodied throughout human flesh and extended into the social and technological environment'. This change in understanding agency is the effect of Kathy's resistance; it is what Ishiguro wants to put forward to awaken us to the fact that we are already in techno-dystopia, and that if we ever want to begin to transform techno-dystopia into a more equitable techno-utopia, this is the realisation or perspective shift that needs to happen.

¹⁰⁸ Erynn Masi de Casanova and Afshan Jafar, 'The Body as a Site of Resistance', in *The SAGE Handbook of Resistance*, ed. by David Courpasson and Steven Vallas (London: SAGE Publications, 2016), pp. 139-155 (p. 141).

¹⁰⁹ Hayles, *How We Became Posthuman: Virtual Bodies in Cybernetics, Literature, and Informatics*, p. 5.

Simultaneously, this perspective shift that occurs through Kathy's kinaesthetic practice of engineering her moving archive within her body is mobilised through unreliability. That is to say, Kathy's clone body is a lively, artificially intelligent body-in-process that is engineered through the powerful force that is the unreliability of memory but is not enslaved by this unreliability. As Whatley notes, citing Davies: 'the body's memory is very powerful but memory is companion, the task is not about trying to remember things perfectly'¹¹³. By rendering the unreliable liveliness of technology through the body-in-process, Ishiguro ultimately offers us a dynamic sense of how alternative possibilities can be generated as humans and machines live together in a contemporary posthuman world, wherein 'As inhabitants of globally interconnected networks, we are joined in a dynamic co-evolutionary spiral with intelligent machines as well as with other biological species with whom we share the planet'¹¹⁴. This is a global movement, but this awakening starts from the particular lived experience of marginalised, technologised bodies such as Kathy and her intentional, bodily practice of engineering her memories.

CONCLUSION

In this chapter, we have seen that the movements of human bodies and androids/clones hunting, stalking, and shadowing each other in Philip K. Dick's novel *Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep?* and Kazuo Ishiguro's novel *Never Let Me Go* signify practices of resistance that account for lived experiences of globalisation at different cultural sites. I have argued that Dick's and Ishiguro's representations of bodily unreliability are attentive to bodily kinaesthesia—how sentient bodies move and engage with the world through a form of 'corporeal consciousness' that informs their lived experiences of globalisation.

In particular, bodily reliability and unreliability works from the kinaesthetic understanding of the body as *techne*—that is, as bodies-in-process that make us consider 'how bodies become assembled in particular ways through their coupling or conjoining with particular objects, practices, techniques and

¹¹³ Whatley, p. 132.

¹¹⁴ Hayles, 'Unfinished Work: From Cyborg to Cognisphere', p. 164.

artefacts such that they are always bodies in the making rather than being ready-made'¹¹⁶. I have also shown that by rendering these practices of making their bodies unreliable, these posthuman bodies recuperate the tensions inherent in the confusion of organic-machinic boundaries and resist the globalisation of techno-utopianism. Techno-utopianism assumes technology to be reliable and never to fail in providing all-encompassing solutions that can remedy and resolve existing inequalities in the global political economy.

Both texts, which posit alternative posthuman futures, show how these practices of bodily unreliability are enacted at the respective sites of Earth and at Hailsham, an English boarding school. In *Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep?*, the bodily devolution of the humans Rick Deckard and John Isidore, as well as the increasing liveliness of the androids Rachael Rosen and Roy Baty, reveal their unreliability. Human and android unreliability reflect their lived experiences of enslavement and marginality in global techno-utopianism. We have seen that Deckard resists by falling asleep at his locality—an act of strike that expresses his particular lived experience and resists against global, universal determination of how his body should move. I have also addressed the effectiveness of his resistance. But Dick was not concerned with android resistance because he was more alert of the turning point when humans would be led by their technologised other and become inanimate amid our increasingly lively technologised environment.

To get a better sense of android resistance, I have turned to *Never Let Me Go* and *Blade Runner*. Ishiguro's choice of a female clone as the 'reliable narrator' of his techno-utopian/dystopian text offers a lived experience of the posthuman body in globalised techno-utopianism from the perspective of an artificial intelligence. Bodily unreliability as enacted by the clones are seen from the agitations of their bodies, visible signs of wear and tear, their acts of deciding the time at which they fail, and the artificially intelligent performance of memory. These examples of bodily unreliability occur as the local supply of clone donors modify their bodily behaviour to resist global determination of the function of their bodies to provide for global medical needs. The effectiveness of

¹¹⁶ Blackman, p. 107.

such resistances can be contentious as Kathy has been seen as passively complicit in maintaining the status quo of the techno-utopian system.

But I have argued that it is through the artificially intelligent performance of memory that Ishiguro challenges us to expand our conception of agency in a posthuman context. For AI resistance is to engineer its own ‘moving archive’ within its technologised body as is authentic to its particular lived experience of this world. In turn, this engineering of a moving archive enacts a perspective shift of a version of posthumanism that celebrates the finitude of human being. This perspective shift transforms our understanding of the relation between human and machinic. Consequently, our lived experiences of techno-utopian globalisation also begin to be changed by being attentive to the workings of these bodies-in-process.

These two practices of resistance as shown in the novels and film adaptation exemplify how posthuman intelligent beings that are marginalised in techno-utopia enact motor decisions through their bodies that have motor intentionality. By rendering the lived experience of marginalisation and of resistance in kinaesthetic terms, specifically presenting the body-as-techné, Dick and Ishiguro show that kinaesthetic intelligence of bodies in terms of its motor intentionality means that posthuman bodies can re-engineer or ‘make’ and ‘unmake’ themselves such that they change their own understanding and perspective of their positionality in terms of the underlying organic-inorganic relation that constructs them, instead of being inanimate instruments that merely perform as they are designed to. Correspondingly, this shift in understanding has signalled the beginning of how these resistance practices could invite subjects to effect change. This sense of motor intentionality and resistance as a practice of making and unmaking one’s body thus develops the previous chapter’s understanding of resistance for greater relevance in the context of technology.

From both novels, we have also begun to get the sense that these global techno-utopian practices of technological development are colonising practices in themselves—to recall Rosen’s assertion that he is only developing androids for the colonisers and Ishiguro’s description of the clones as slaves. Under these posthuman colonising practices, certain bodies are physically exploited as resources for more ‘worthy’, ‘elite’ people—practices that (as Hayles reminds us) exemplify more malignant forms of posthuman thinking that instrumentalise

both human bodies and their tools. A kinaesthetic understanding about the body as *techne* in relation to colonisation has helped us to get a sense of how posthuman bodies are reliably engineered or assembled for exploitation by other bodies. But even as the body as *techne* attends to the lived experience of how posthuman bodies are reliably engineered or assembled through the organic-inorganic relation, this colonising practice also involves another related lived experience—that of the sense of having demands placed on one's bodily resources as part of continuous global technological innovation. In other words, the body becomes resource. Deckard's and Kathy's exhaustion are examples of this embodied experience.

How can we understand the experience of having demands placed on one's bodily resources in terms of bodily kinaesthesia? While reliability focuses on the experience of one's body as being engineered or assembled, the authors I look at in the next chapter suggest that we can kinaesthetically understand the experience of having demands placed on one's bodily resources by considering the practices of bodily labour involved in repurposing materials from the ecological environment for the driving and energising of global techno-utopian society—that is, the body as a form of energy resource. This will offer us a kinaesthetic understanding of how local bodies become exploitatively developed into 'human resources' in relation to the global development of natural resources from the ecological environment under neo-colonialism—a link which Vandana Shiva has highlighted as underlying industrialist colonialist practices. In turn, we also get a sense of how these local bodies resist such global exploitative development.

Energetic Bodies

This chapter examines the movements of bodies that are marginalised in the local and global distribution of resource materials in the contemporary era, as presented in Bengali writer Mahasweta Devi's long story 'Pterodactyl, Puran Sahay, and Pirtha' (1995)¹ (hereafter abbreviated as 'Pterodactyl') and Martinican writer Patrick Chamoiseau's novel *Texaco* (1998)². In this chapter, I contend that both writers' attentiveness to bodily kinaesthesia in their texts uncover the exploitativeness of global practices of 'development' that drives neo-colonial globalisation today. By bodily kinaesthesia, I refer to how sentient bodies move and engage with the world through time and space through a form of 'corporeal consciousness' which produces their lived experiences of a globalising world.³

From the previous chapter, we have begun to get a sense of the demands that globalised technological innovation—a phenomenon of contemporary development⁴—has put on posthuman bodies. The fatigued and worn-down bodies of the human Rick Deckard in Philip K. Dick's novel *Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep?*, the android Roy Baty in Ridley Scott's film adaptation *Blade Runner*, and the clone Kathy H. in Kazuo Ishiguro's novel *Never Let Me Go* show how these bodies are exploited and used as energy resources for techno-utopian development, to the point that they tire out and expire, becoming waste

¹ Mahasweta Devi, 'Pterodactyl, Puran Sahay, and Pirtha', in *Imaginary Maps*, trans. by Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak (New York: Routledge, 1995), pp. 95-196. Further references are given after quotations in the text.

² Patrick Chamoiseau, *Texaco*, trans. by Rose Myriam Réjouis and Val Vinokurov (New York: Vintage International Random House, 1998). Further references are given after quotations in the text.

³ Lisa Blackman, *The Body: The Key Concepts* (Oxford and New York: Berg, 2008), p. 83.

⁴ Wolfgang Sachs denotes an underlying techno-utopianism in the narrative of contemporary globalised development in his statement: 'For more than a century, technology carried the promise of redeeming the human condition from sweat, toil and tears.' Wolfgang Sachs, 'Introduction', in *The Development Dictionary: A Guide to Knowledge as Power*, ed. by Wolfgang Sachs, 2nd edn (London: Zed Books, 2010), pp. xv-xx (p. xvi).

matter. At the same time, the fact that Kathy's clone body is modelled from the bodies of junkies and prostitutes, who are described as 'trash', illuminates how certain bodies deemed of less value are re-used and 'developed' for instrumental uses.

As technological machines have an intimate relation to the resources that drive or energise them, we not only need to consider the body-as-techné, but we also need to consider the body as a form of energy resource or energy supply. Additionally, we need to consider how the body and its energy are used in relation to how natural resources are developed from the ecological environment. This is because global techno-utopian society is energised by both human bodies and the materials of nature, which are themselves indivisibly linked through the dynamic mode of interaction that is labour. I will elaborate further on the workings of this dynamic mode of interaction in terms of energy in the next section, within the context of neo-colonial development. But by attending to the body-as-energy in this chapter, this also allows us to understand the issue of politicised energy.

Devi and Chamoiseau's texts register kinaesthetic awareness of how the movements of the Indian tribals and Martinican shantytown dwellers in their localities—as they repurpose the resource materials around them—reflect their lived experiences of being marginalised in the uneven local and global distribution of resource materials as these regions are developed under neo-colonial globalisation. At the same time, it is through these recycling practices that Devi and Chamoiseau show how these marginalised people enact local, alternative practices of sustainability that resist their exploitation under neo-colonial development. By embodied resistance, I mean the act of modifying one's bodily practices such that '*motor* decisions' are made that challenge cultural meanings in profound ways.⁵ In kinaesthetic terms, these recycling practices exemplify the earlier mentioned dynamic mode of interaction that links humans and nature in an indivisible relationship. We will also see that these resistance practices have political effects.

In the following section, I will contextualise neo-colonial development in the contemporary era and show how its practices on a local and global scale can

⁵ Carrie Noland, *Agency and Embodiment: Performing Gestures/Producing Culture* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2009), p. 3.

be understood in kinaesthetic terms of the body-as-energy resource. I will also elaborate on the dynamic and indivisible mode of interaction between humans and nature that underlies such development practices.

NEO-COLONIAL DEVELOPMENT

Alan Thomas observes that the second half of the twentieth century, in particular, has been characterised as the ‘era of development’⁷. Citing Wolfgang Sachs, who was writing in 1992 about the preceding forty years, the globalising allure of development is described thus:

Like a towering lighthouse guiding sailors towards the coast, ‘development’ stood as *the* idea which oriented emerging nations in their journey through post-war history. No matter whether democracies or dictatorships, the countries of the South proclaimed development as their primary aspiration, after they had been freed from colonial domination.⁸

But Sachs, in his own work, has pointed out that this sense of development is a kind of universal idea of growth and maturation is not as homogenous as proposed. For the ‘lighthouse of development’ was erected right after the Second World War by the U.S., when Harry S. Truman introduced the term ‘underdeveloped’ in his inaugural address on 20 January 1949.

Truman said:

We must embark on a bold new program for making the benefits of our scientific advances and industrial progress available for the improvement and growth of underdeveloped areas.

The old imperialism—exploitation for foreign profit—has no place in our plans. What we envisage is a program of development based on the concepts of democratic fair dealing.⁹

⁷ Alan Thomas, ‘Poverty and the “end of development”’, in *Poverty and Development into the 21st Century*, ed. by Tim Allen and Alan Thomas (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), pp. 3-22 (p. 5).

⁸ Sachs, p. xv. Cited in Thomas, ‘Poverty and the “end of development”’, p. 5.

⁹ Harry S. Truman, ‘Inaugural Address, 20 January 1949’, in *Documents on American Foreign Relations* (Connecticut: Princeton University Press, 1967). Cited in Gustavo Esteva, ‘Development’, in *The Development Dictionary: A Guide to Knowledge as Power*, pp. 1-23 (p. 1).

Sylvia H. Chant and Cathy McIlwaine observe that although the world had previously been divided into the colonisers and the colonised, at this juncture, Truman set out for the first time, in theory at least, a vision where all countries were viewed as equal within the world system.¹⁰ But they, following Gustavo Esteva, also emphasise that this inherently political term of ‘underdeveloped’ became an emblem for the imposition of North American ideals on the rest of the world¹¹, and that being ‘underdeveloped’ somehow implied ‘an undignified condition’¹². Since two-thirds of the world were now ‘underdeveloped’, by way of Truman’s narrative, Allen and Thomas further note that underdevelopment, in this context, also carried the assumption that most of the world which now had to define themselves as having fallen into the undignified condition called underdevelopment, now also had ‘to look outside their own cultures for salvation’¹³.

Re-reading Truman’s address in terms of energy, Truman’s idea of development entailed a kind of knowledge about the relationship between humans and nature—‘the benefits of our scientific advances and industrial progress’—that would be shared by the ‘developed’ Global North with the ‘underdeveloped’ Global South. But as Esteva asserts, Truman had simply substituted a new word for what had already been there: backwardness or poverty.¹⁴ In his particular phrasing, then, Truman conveniently ignored the fact that “backward” or “poor” countries were in that condition due to past lootings in the process of colonization and the continued raping by capitalist exploitation at the national and international level: underdevelopment was the creation of development’¹⁵. To render this in terms of the relationship between human bodies and the ecological environment again, ‘the benefits of our scientific advances and industrial progress’ that Truman referred to had been achieved at the cost of causing other areas to be ‘underdeveloped’, via processes that extracted and depleted energy (from nature *and* from human bodies) from these other areas of the world to the point of exhaustion. There is also the underlying

¹⁰ Sylvia Chant and Cathy McIlwaine, *Geographies of Development in the 21st Century: An Introduction to the Global South* (Cheltenham: Edward Elgar Publishing, 2009), p. 7.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 7.

¹² Esteva, p. 2.

¹³ Allen and Thomas, p. 5.

¹⁴ Esteva, p. 7.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 11.

but unacknowledged implication that there is a great disparity in the rates of energy consumption between the ‘developed’ Global North and the ‘underdeveloped’ Global South.

Since Truman’s notion of development as ‘democratic fair dealing’ suppressed the U.S.’s—as well as its (Western) European allies—complicity in this energy depletion of other countries, as well as the unacknowledged disparity of rates of energy consumption, this idea of ‘development’ in the contemporary era of neo-colonial globalisation is shown to be already unsustainable at its root. For this suppression of complicity shows this notion of ‘development’ to be hypocritical and exploitative—a move which, in its material practices, re-performs the exploitative ‘development’ of nature into resource to produce energy for human consumption.

Comparing the understanding of the term ‘resource’ in early modern times as suggesting ‘reciprocity along with regeneration’ to that of the new meaning of ‘natural resources’ that emerged in 1870 with the advent of industrialism and colonialism, Vandana Shiva observes:

In this view, nature has been clearly stripped of her creative power; she has turned into a container for raw materials waiting to be transformed into inputs for commodity production. Resources are now merely ‘any material or conditions existing in nature which may be capable of economic exploitation’. With the capacity of regeneration gone, the attitude of reciprocity has also lost its ground: it is now simply human inventiveness and industry which impart value to nature. For natural resources require to be ‘developed’.¹⁶

Shiva further shows how this sense of ‘developing’ nature into resource to produce energy for human consumption is also linked to the exploitative ‘development’ of certain human bodies:

From now on, it will become common sense that ‘natural resources cannot develop themselves; it is only through the application of human knowledge and skill that anything can be made of them, and most of the necessary work requires skill of a very high order.’

Nature, whose real nature it is to rise again, was transformed by this originally Western world-view into dead and manipulable matter. Its capacity to renew and grow had been denied. It had become dependent on

¹⁶ Vandana Shiva, ‘Resources’, in *The Development Dictionary: A Guide to Knowledge as Power*, pp. 228-42 (p. 228).

people. The development of people was thus essential for the development of nature. This was particularly true for nature and the colonies. [...]

This created a new dualism between nature and humans. Since nature needed to be ‘developed’ by humans, people had also to be developed from their primitive, backward states of embeddedness in nature. Nature’s transformation into natural resources needed to go hand in hand with the transformation of culturally diverse people into ‘skilled human resources’. [...] The relationship of people to nature was transformed, from one based on responsibility, restraint and reciprocity to one based on unrestrained exploitation.¹⁷

Shiva thus brings to light an unequal and exploitative understanding of the dynamic and indivisible relationship between humans and nature which, in its instrumentalisation of both nature and human bodies in the production of energy, is one that is based on a sense of *depleting* the ecological environment—including the *depletion* of human bodies and their energies for this aim—rather than a sense of *renewal* and *regeneration*.

Here, I would like to elaborate on the dynamic mode of interaction that indivisibly links humans and the ecological environment, which undercuts neo-colonial development practices. This will offer us a sense of how humans and nature work in relation to each other in kinaesthetic terms of the body-as-energy, as well as the political dimension of this interaction.

Upamanyu Pablo Mukherjee refers to such practices of development as the ‘cultural production of nature’, and the mode of interaction between humans and the environment as ‘labour’.¹⁸ Mukherjee’s understanding of this dialectical relationship between humans and nature draws on Raymond Williams, who states:

I say that the idea of nature contains, though often unnoticed, an extraordinary amount of human history. [...] A considerable part of what we call natural landscape [...] is the product of human design and human labour, and in admiring it as natural it matters very much whether we suppress that fact of labour or acknowledge it.¹⁹

¹⁷ Shiva, pp. 228-29.

¹⁸ Upamanyu Pablo Mukherjee, *Postcolonial Environments: Nature, Culture and the Contemporary Indian Novel in English* (Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), p. 61.

¹⁹ Raymond Williams, *Culture and Materialism* (London: Verso, 2005), pp. 67 and 78. Cited in Mukherjee, pp. 60-61.

Williams thus presents the key ideas of nature and history as interpenetrating each other and of the production (as opposed to domination) of nature.²⁰ His assertion of the role that human labour plays within this cultural production of nature also critically highlights the bodily aspect of this ‘always-existing interaction between humans and environment, history and nature’²¹. In this chapter, what I refer to as the body-as-energy resource or energy supply, then, is my attempt to understand the dynamics of practices of human labour in terms of bodily kinaesthesia.

For Williams, the fact that labour gets suppressed indicates the idea of the separation between man and nature that undercuts modern industry and urbanism—which echoes Shiva’s observation about the changing meaning of the term ‘resource’.²² Yet he argues that ‘the separation is a function of an increasingly real interaction’ wherein these ‘real relations are extremely active, diverse, self-conscious, and in effect continuous’.²³ This is especially since ‘We have mixed our labour with the earth, our forces with its forces too deeply to be able to draw back and separate either out’²⁴.

To get a sense of the workings of these ‘real relations’ between humans and the ecological environment, Williams calls for us ‘to look at all our products and activities, good and bad, and to see the relationships between them which are our own real relationships’²⁵. In this chapter, my consideration of the bodily changes that the Indian tribals and Caribbean shantytown dwellers undergo, becoming depleted of their energies into wasted flesh and dislocated bodies as resource materials are diverted from follows this call. This examination of ‘our products and activities, good and bad, and to see the relationships between them’ reveals inequality and exploitation, as Williams notes:

If we say only that we have mixed our labour with the earth, our forces with its forces, we are stopping short of the truth that we have done this unequally. [...] Out of the ways in which we have interacted with the physical world we have made not only human nature and an altered natural order; we have also made societies. It is very significant that most

²⁰ Mukherjee, p. 61.

²¹ *Ibid.*, p. 61.

²² Williams, p. 83.

²³ *Ibid.*, p. 83.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 83.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 83-84.

of the terms we have used in this relationship—the conquest of nature, the domination of nature, the exploitation of nature—are derived from the real human practices: relations between men and men. [...] Capitalism, of course, has relied on the terms of domination and exploitation; imperialism, in conquest, has similarly seen both men and physical products as raw material.²⁶

Williams’ insights about the exploitative relations amongst humans in the context of the cultural production of nature once again echoes Shiva’s observation about the ‘development’ of certain bodies deemed of less value for the ‘development’ of nature into resource under capitalist and neo-colonial development. As mentioned earlier, we can understand these exploitative relations in kinaesthetic terms of the body-as-energy resource and from how these bodies are prematurely depleted of their energies in relation to ecological depletion.

It is this sense of the mode of interaction between human and nature as depletive rather than regenerative, then, that underpinned Truman’s notion of development, as well as his denial of the disparity in global rates of energy consumption. As the literary texts considered in this chapter show, this disparity in global rates of energy consumption and uneven development should also not be understood today merely in terms of the ‘Global North’ versus the ‘Global South’ but which, under global capitalism, can also be registered from the ‘underdeveloped’ areas existing at the heart of ‘developed’ countries.

At the same time, these literary texts show how it is this exploitative and depletive understanding of the relationship between humans and nature underlying this contemporary idea of ‘development’ and its material practices that ultimately makes the notion of ‘development’ unsustainable as a global vision that would supposedly enable the creation of the global commons that was also implied in Truman’s speech. Citing Anne McClintock, Mukherjee observes that the ‘myth’ of development has had a grievous impact on global ecologies, as evidenced by the burning and shrinking tropical forests of the Amazon, Congo and Indonesia, poisoned water and food crops in south Asia and deaths from starvation in Africa.²⁷ Mukherjee further notes that we still hear echoes of this in

²⁶ Williams, p. 84.

²⁷ Anne McClintock, ‘The Angel of Progress: Pitfalls of the Term “Post-Colonialism”’, *Social Text*, 31/32 (1992), 84-98 (p. 95). Cited in Mukherjee, p. 51.

today's conferences on 'sustainable development', where governments and transnational corporations force through measures that protect their demands and interests even as they adopt a certain 'green-speak' about collective responsibilities to the environment, and he points out that it remains unclear how governments of both the 'north' and the 'south', operating within the laws of transnational, corporatised market systems, would use their forest resources without contravening the rights of indigenous or occupied peoples.²⁸ Accordingly, Mukherjee asserts that we should see the concept of 'sustainable development' not as the road to salvation, but as the flipside of worldwide 'modes-of-resource' conflict and competition.²⁹

Contemporary literary texts such as Devi's 'Pterodactyl' and Chamoiseau's *Texaco* register these exploitative forces of contemporary neo-colonial development through bodily kinaesthesia. As mentioned earlier, both writers show kinaesthetic awareness of how the movements of marginalised bodies as they repurpose the resource materials around them reflect the unevenness of the local and global distribution of resource materials, as well as global disparity in rates of energy consumption, amid the neo-colonial development of India and Martinique respectively.

'Pterodactyl' tells of a journalist's visit to Pirtha, a tribal village in the Indian state of Madhya Pradesh, and his experiences with its inhabitants who are poor and suffering from starvation. It is intimated in this long story that this starvation is the outcome of local exploitation—it is a 'Man-made famine' (p. 125)—whereby natural resources such as those of crops and land are siphoned off these tribals by 'developed' upper castes. Through the perspective of the journalist, Puran Sahay, Devi also depicts the wasted and malnourished bodies of these tribals as kinaesthetic registrations of their marginalisation in the global distribution of resource materials, seeing as the crops that are diverted away from the tribals are also sent to other 'underdeveloped' countries as part of the Green Revolution of Madhya Pradesh (p. 164). Yet the arrival of a pterodactyl to the tribal village—a prehistoric creature that is taken to be the embodied manifestation of the 'unquiet soul' (p. 120) of the tribals' ancestors—troubles the status quo of tribal underdevelopment. In this chapter, I will examine how Devi's

²⁸ Mukherjee, pp. 36-37.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 78.

presentation of the pterodactyl posits an energetic tribal mode of resistance that counters the exploitative forces underpinning modern India's neo-colonial development.

Texaco details the experiences of Marie-Sophie Laborieux, the daughter of a freed slave, as she tries to survive in Fort-de-France—the capital of the island-state of Martinique. In the novel, we see that Marie-Sophie, as well as other bodies on the lower rungs of Martinican society, continue to be marginalised in the local and global distribution of energy resources and exploited amid the island-state's development. As a former colony and current overseas *département* of France, Martinique's development is tied to France's political and economic heft in the global community. But Chamoiseau's reference to the presence of oil refineries on the coasts of Martinique, particularly those owned by the American company of the same name as the title of his novel, also indicate the shift in Martinique's transnational relations under contemporary neo-colonial globalisation—as not just with France, but with other parts of the world.

Given that the historical conditions of Martinique and India are very different, the trajectories of the local and global distribution of energy resources in *Texaco* also differ from those in 'Pterodactyl'. In his novel, Chamoiseau uses 'City'—described by Marie-Sophie as 'the pedestal of the rare things which bettered life' (p. 316)—as exemplifying a 'developed', globalising centre of energy consumption, with the shantytown that Marie-Sophie builds on City's outskirts as a 'underdeveloped' site. But like Devi, Chamoiseau is kinaesthetically aware of the dynamic and indivisible mode of interaction between bodies and resource material. It is through her building of a shantytown near the oil refineries that we see Marie-Sophie countering her marginalisation and exploitation through the laborious movements of her body, fighting for basic resources such as 'water, electricity, a path over the mud, solid steps, cement scuppers' (p. 367) at her peripheral site of habitation.

As such, this chapter contends that both writers' attention to bodily kinaesthesia—wherein the body is understood as a form of energy resource—enables us to recognise unique practices of sustainable development by these marginalised people that counter the unsustainability of contemporary neo-colonial development and that are attentive to their particular, lived experiences

of a globalising world. Both Devi and Chamoiseau ultimately indicate in their texts that these energetic and embodied practices of repurposing resource material suggest another story of development—one that is not directed by the exploitative relationship between humans and nature, but rather of reciprocity—what Shiva calls ‘an ancient idea about the relationship between humans and nature: that the earth bestows gifts on humans who, in turn, are well advised to show diligence in order not to suffocate her generosity’³⁰.

ROTTING MOUTHS

Chamoiseau and Devi present the exploitation of marginalised bodies and their energy in Martinique and India respectively such that they become ‘human resources’, as natural resources and raw materials are diverted from these bodies and their sites of habitation. I will first examine ‘Pterodactyl’ to explore how this exploitation is kinaesthetically exemplified in the wasted flesh and skeletal bodies of starving Indian tribals. As I will show, these wasted and skeletal tribal bodies reflect Devi’s representation of the body as a form of energy supply that is prematurely depleted, as they are marginalised in modern India.

Tribal peoples constitute about 8 percent of India’s total population, about 104 million people according to the 2011 census.³¹ The status of the tribal in India has been complicated as colonial rule has had a varied impact upon the different adivasi communities in India, producing a wide range of responses among them in their transition to modernity.³² In the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, British imposition of a system of paternalistic rule by district officers and a new legal system drastically affected the cohesive tribal community structure.³³ The changed mode of political control, which conferred control over vast territories, including adivasi territories, to designated feudal lords for the

³⁰ Shiva, p. 228.

³¹ Stuart Blackburn, ‘The formation of tribal identities’, in *The Cambridge Companion to Modern Indian Culture*, ed. by Vasudha Dalmia and Rashmi Sadana (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), pp. 30–48 (p. 30). See also 2011 Primary Census Abstract <http://www.censusindia.gov.in/2011census/hlo/pca/pca_pdf/PCA-CRC-0000.pdf> [accessed 17 August 2018].

³² Sanjukta Das Gupta, ‘Introduction’, in *Narratives from the Margins: Aspects of Adivasi History in India*, ed. by Sanjukta Das Gupta and Raj Sekhar Basu (Delhi: Primus Books, 2012), pp. 1–16 (p. 1).

³³ *Ibid.*, p. 1.

purpose of revenue collection by the British redefined the status of different groups of adivasis in Indian society and eliminated much of the influence of the traditional adivasi leadership.³⁴ The move to categorise the people and their privileges resulted in the imposition of uniform systems, disintegrating old village institutions and distorting the roles of key village functionaries, thus replacing pre-existing local differences and complexities.³⁵

As the different adivasi groups in India sought to adjust to the new stresses and strains, tensions arose from the intrusion of colonial authority and found expression in acts of rebellion.³⁶ To the state, such dissent represented a law-and-order problem and was often ruthlessly suppressed; yet these everyday forms of protest by the adivasis were too regular for the state to ignore.³⁷ Consequently, the adivasi world figured in official perceptions as the backdrop of the colonial state's counter-insurgency measures and the adivasi was portrayed as a savage, 'criminal', and wreaking terror in the countryside.³⁸ Postcolonial India inherited and perpetuated these divisive notions of 'criminal' tribes—which was replaced by the term 'denotified' tribes—and 'Scheduled Tribes'.³⁹ This negative association with tribes are not only due to colonial rule—Hindu caste society had, since ancient times, been derogatory of life in the wilderness—but in the course of colonial rule, these groups came to be identified in racial and evolutionary terms, gradually rigidifying and homogenising community identities.⁴⁰

In the context of neo-colonial exploitation of adivasis in India in the contemporary era, Nandini Sundar points out that economic processes increasingly see them as irrelevant and deny their very right to exist. In the 'shining' India of the twenty-first century, adivasis appear as an anachronism—people the Indian government and industrialists would rather forget as they eye

³⁴ C. R. Bijoy, 'The Adivasis of India—A History of Discrimination, Conflict and Resistance', *Indigenous Affairs*, 1/01 (2001), 54-61 (p. 55).

³⁵ Das Gupta, p. 1.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 2. See also Kathleen Gough, 'Indian Peasant Uprisings', *Economic and Political Weekly*, 9.32-34 (1974), 1391-1412.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 2.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 2. See also Meena Radhakrishna, *Dishonoured by History: 'Criminal Tribes' and British Colonial Policy* (New Delhi: Orient Longman, 2001).

³⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 3.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 3. See also Radhakrishna; and Bhangya Bhukya, 'The Mapping of the Adivasi Social: Colonial Anthropology and Adivasis', *Economic and Political Weekly*, 43.39 (2008), 103-09).

new lands for SEZs, industrial projects, or large dams.⁴¹ Connecting globalisation to a longer history of dispossession of adivasis, Sundar notes that adivasis used to be thrown out of their villages without any compensation because the government wanted to take over their forests for revenue generation; now the takeover is often justified under the friendly name of joint forest management or conservation.⁴² We thus begin to get a sense of how tribals are being exploited under neo-colonialism in the contemporary era.

Devi herself worked tirelessly for the rights of the tribals in India for the last two decades. In 1965, she visited Palamu in Bihar, India and saw firsthand the dismal conditions under which many of India's indigenous people live.⁴³ India's tribal people became Devi's primary concern; she saw the tribal people as emblematic of social oppression in India.⁴⁴ Devi helped tribals and the rural dispossessed in organising themselves in groups so that they could take up development activities in their own areas.⁴⁵ She founded several grassroot level societies for the welfare of tribals, including the Denotified and Notified Tribal Rights Action Group (DNT-RAG) that works towards improved conditions for India's indigenous people through outreach, education, legal intervention, and community activism.⁴⁶ Deeply moved by the everyday realities she saw around her, Devi documented life among India's tribal communities and their struggles through her writing.⁴⁷ The long story 'Pterodactyl' is one of more than a hundred

⁴¹ Nandini Sundar, 'Adivasi Politics and State Responses: Historical Processes and Contemporary Concerns', in *Narratives from the Margins: Aspects of Adivasi History in India*, pp. 237-54 (p. 237).

⁴² *Ibid.*, p. 238.

⁴³ Roopika Risam, 'Mahasweta Devi: A Brief Biography', in *Mahasweta Devi: Witness, Advocate, Writer Study Guide, Documentary Educational Resources*, 2006 <<http://der.org/resources/study-guides/mahasweta-devi-study-guide.pdf>> [accessed 21 August 2018] (para. 2 of 3).

⁴⁴ *Ibid.* (para. 2).

⁴⁵ PTI, 'Mahasweta Devi, writer who fought for tribals, dies at 91', *livemint*, 28 July 2016 <https://www.livemint.com/Consumer/eIwhxyCao0DUQwOrOmVZfP/Mahasweta-Devi-writer-who-fought-for-tribals-dies-at-91.html?utm_source=scroll&utm_medium=referral&utm_campaign=scroll> [accessed 21 August 2018] (para. 7 of 13).

⁴⁶ PTI (para. 7). See also Risam.

⁴⁷ Kaushik Swaminathan, 'Mahasweta Devi, Bengali Writer and Activist Who Fought Injustice, Dies at 90', *The New York Times*, 2 August 2016 <<https://www.nytimes.com/2016/08/03/books/mahasweta-devi-bengali-writer-and-activist-who-fought-injustice-dies-at-90.html>> [accessed 21 August 2018]. See also Lifestyle Desk, 'Mahasweta Devi's 92nd birth anniversary: Remembering the fiery author and her work', *The Indian Express*, 14 January 2018 <<https://indianexpress.com/article/lifestyle/books/mahasweta-devi-92nd-birth-anniversary-google-doodle-her-books-and-novels-5024067/>> [accessed 21 August 2018].

novels and short stories on this subject wherein the creature represents, in Devi's own words, 'my estimation, born of experience, of Indian tribal society' (p. 196).

'Pterodactyl' tells of the experiences of Puran, a journalist, when he visits Pirtha, a tribal village in Madhya Pradesh, and interacts with its inhabitants, the Nagesia tribals. Through Puran's eyes, we see that the tribals are chronically malnourished. Their bodies have taken on skeletal forms:

Many pairs of mute, dim eyes. As if they're looking from far away.

[...] The priest [...] sacrifices the eggs with his bony meagre hand
[...] The infants rest their faces like ticks on the chests of the skeleton mothers.

(p. 128)

We are especially given a vivid sense of the starving tribal body when Puran catches an old tribal woman who collapses—'Puran puts his arms around her. A strange mixed smell attacks him: of dying of starvation bit by bit, of an unwashed body, of a rotting mouth' (pp. 130-131).

Devi's depictions of these skeletal tribal bodies and the tribal woman's rotting mouth are kinaesthetic registrations of the corrupt development practices underlying the uneven distribution of resources and disparity of energy consumption in modern India. For in the course of Puran's investigative journalism, we are told that the Nagesia tribals of Pirtha are chronically malnourished from a 'Man-made famine' that is produced through the corrupted routing of food supply and land exploitation, and perpetuated by the government's denial of extreme food scarcity in this region (p. 124). In fact, we are told that 'For a long time people have been dying in Pirtha', even though the Indian government does not recognise this fact: 'the State Government says "No story"' (p. 98). Devi thus indicates how these wasted tribal bodies show cracks in practices of contemporary development, as it is this man-made famine that has caused the tribals' habitation zone to become 'a place of perennial starvation' (p. 104). The tribals' mouths are rotting from such toxic practices of corruption and exploitation on a national and global scale—their bodies turning into waste matter as they are depleted of their energy.

Poison energetically laces Devi's long story, with its lethal effects corrupting these tribal bodies and bringing them ever closer to the point of

extinction. For one, it materialises in the insecticide that is sprayed all over the dusty fields of Pirtha under the supposed auspices of ‘Farm Aid week’ (p. 122). This same insecticide is collected by the bit of rainfall that occurs in the middle of the existing drought, that flows as poisonous water into tribal-dug wells, which the tribals subsequently drink (p. 122). As the poisonous water is also absorbed by the flesh tuber of the Khajra (a prized tribal plant), the combined tainted consumption of well water and tubers causes a tribal epidemic that is worsened by near-inaccessible, blinkered, backward healthcare services and corrupted tribal welfare departments (p. 99). Lacking clean water to farm their kodo-kutki crops, together with the persistent diversions and disappearances of government aid purported to be moving towards them—the Sub-Divisional Officer (SDO) tells Puran, ‘We sent water, it’s coming, it’s coming; the water *tank* didn’t get there. Both the *truck* and the *tank* had disappeared’ (p. 99)—Puran is told that the tribals ‘died of drinking that very water’ (p. 123) that has been contaminated. The skeletal shapes that the tribals’ bodies have taken on therefore exemplify the deformed logic of such local resource distribution processes as carried out under the developmentalist banner of governmental tribal relief, which purports to replenish these bodies but instead, prematurely depletes them or poisons them to the point that they expire.

For another, in ‘Pterodactyl’, this toxicity and deformity also underlies the global practices of ‘Agri-business’ (p. 109) that promote the image of ‘the green revolutionary area of the State of Madhya Pradesh’ (p. 164). The Green Revolution was a national programme backed by advisers from the U.S. and other countries, which saw Indian farmers abandoning traditional farming methods in the sixties and seventies and growing crops the ‘developed’ American way—with chemicals, high-yield seeds and irrigation—so as to feed its growing population.⁴⁸ Devi points out the deformed logic underlying the fact that because Madhya Pradesh has become the site of the so-called ‘green revolution’ and even the ‘soybean revolution’ (p. 109), ‘nobody will allow you to say that an atom of the green revolutionary area of the State of Madhya Pradesh is in the “perpetual famine” zone of extreme backward tribals’ (p. 164). In fact,

⁴⁸ Daniel Zwerdling, “‘Green Revolution’ Trapping India’s Farmers in Debt’, *NPR*, 14 April 2009 <<http://www.npr.org/2009/04/14/102944731/green-revolution-trapping-indias-farmers-in-debt>> [accessed 13 June 2017] (para. 3 of 52).

the fantastic, shape-shifted vegetables that sprout from such dubious business practices embody this toxicity and deformity, leading Devi to ask witheringly:

What will you finally grow in the soil, having murdered nature in the application of man-imposed substitutes? 'Deadly DDT greens, / charnel-house vegetables, / uprooted astonished onions, radioactive potatoes / explosive bean-pods, monstrous and misshapen / spastic gourds, eggplants with mobile tails / bloodthirsty octopus creepers, animal blood-filled / tomatoes?'

(p. 157)

Crucially, Devi notes that while these deformed crops were now exported batch after batch from Madhya Pradesh to other countries in need such as Africa and Sri Lanka for India's continued development, these crops ironically never reach the starving regions of Pirtha, Kalahandi or Koraput (p. 164). Such practices, then, ensure the further diversion of resources from the tribals in the name of development, hence their rotting mouths.

Devi uncovers this overproduction of crops to be but a move to keep up the appearance of an India that is 'proudly on the way to becoming the biggest power in the Third World' (p. 162). Artificially cultivated in surplus—Devi observes that these crops are so overproduced to the point that rotting food fills the insufficient storage facilities at the Food Corporation (p. 164), bringing to mind once more the rotting mouths of the Nagesia tribals—these deformed crops exemplify the accelerated paces of production and exhibitionary tactics of the 'culinary olympics'⁴⁹ that is global agri-business. Produced and exported as 'showpieces', these crops become what Barbara Kirshenblatt-Gimblett calls 'inedible spectacle'⁵⁰. That is to say, these fantastic vegetables exemplify a globally circulated toxic cuisine that have been so 'developed' as to look more edible and delicious than real food, that 'look good enough to eat', but are never really destined for the mouth⁵¹—in this case, the mouths that are in most desperate need of such food, the Nagesia tribals of Pirtha.

Indeed, we see that these wasted tribal bodies ultimately become commoditised and exploited as human resources for modern India's capitalist

⁴⁹ Barbara Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, 'Playing to the Senses: Food as a Performance Medium', *Performance Research: A Journal of the Performing Arts*, 4.1 (1999), 1-30 (p. 3).

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 3.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, p. 3.

development as a global power in the contemporary era. The tribals become the subjects of documentaries that are made to attract foreign investments that ‘need this video image [of emaciated tribal bodies] as they need food for their aid’ (p. 168). Devi suggests that the tribals themselves are aware of the part they play in this global performance, as intimated through the tribal man Shankar Nagesia’s body language:

[Shankar’s] eyes say to Harisharan in experienced wisdom, I know Sarkar. Everything finally becomes a deal, even giving food to the hungry. At this moment we’re eating his food, in exchange he wants to capture us *in film*.

(p. 168)

Devi further shows how these moving images of the diseased tribal body are used resourcefully by equating these documentary films to laboratory samples, stating that when ‘a *pathological* analysis of the sample is made foreign money comes out’ (p. 170). Styled to filmic petrification by social welfare organisations, the malnourished bodies of the Nagesia tribals become the human equivalents of culinary showpieces themselves. As ‘human resources’, they are locally ‘developed’—which also recalls the processes of film development—into the unsavoury (or in other words, inedible) spectacle of wasted corporeality.

Indeed, Harisharan—the Block Development Officer in charge of Pirtha—sardonically describes the farcical, petri dish-style, video documentation of the tribals as ‘The next show in Geneva’ (p. 169). In helping to serve these starving tribal bodies on a platter for global consumption, these moving images cum laboratory samples exemplify how energy is extracted from these bodies, to enable global audiences to ‘taste’⁵³ and record—‘when the tape recorder is held close you can catch the rattle in the old woman’s throat and her mumble as well as the child’s chirping wail’ (p. 169)—these bodies on a microscopic level without ever needing to come in tangible contact with them. Such exploitative methods of energy extraction as kinaesthetically registered by the wasting away of the tribals’ flesh as well as the corruption of their rotting mouths in relation to the deformed crops, then, signify what Maggie Black calls the illusion that such a

⁵³ Kirshenblatt-Gimblett notes that: ‘Our eyes let us “taste” food at a distance [...] Even a feast for the eyes only will engage the other senses imaginatively, for to see is not only to taste, but also to eat. The chef’s maxim, “A dish well presented is already half eaten”, recognises that eating begins (and may even end) before food enters the body’. Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, p. 3.

thing as ‘international development’ exists.⁵⁴ It is by keeping the tribals in such a wasted state that they are the human resources—that is, a kind of energy supply—for foreign aid, disposable after they are used up. And as inedible spectacles of wasted corporeality, forever bypassed in the deformed routing of natural resources in modern India, the skeletal bodies of the Nagesia tribals manifest the exploitative notion of the relationship between humans and nature that instrumentalises both.

DISLOCATED BODIES

In *Texaco*, the exploitation of people who are marginalised in the local and global distribution of resources and their bodily energies can be seen in the dead bodies that are littered around Marie-Sophie. Marie-Sophie encounters these bodies in the dilapidated, ‘underdeveloped’ quarters of Martinique’s capital Fort-de-France, as well as in the shantytown she later builds on the city’s edges, who, like her, are struggling to survive amid the island-state’s development in the contemporary era. Despite her professed optimism (‘I [...] have always looked at the world in a good light’) and combative spirit (‘We’ve shed tears, we can fight too’), Marie-Sophie also acknowledges the sobering fact that there are casualties suffered, as these people try to survive in a world that systemically exploits them:

But how many wretched ones around me have choked the life out of their bodies? Coolies would hang themselves on the acacia branches of the plantations they burned down. Young blackmen would let themselves die from their crumpled hearts. Chinese would flee the country, panicked, flailing as if drowning.

(pp. 33-34)

After all, these depleted bodies signify their status as human waste in ‘developed’ City—taking on the menial jobs that keep ‘City’s high-class people’ (p. 211) in luxury while simultaneously being under threat at all times of having City ‘sweep them up’ (p. 221). These depleted bodies from other parts of the world, then, kinaesthetically register the exploitative forces of globalised

⁵⁴ Maggie Black, *The No-Nonsense Guide to International Development* (Toronto: New Internationalist Publications, 2002), p. 17.

development, as their energies have been exhausted for the selective development of certain regions.

Yet in his novel, Chamoiseau maps this uneven development of Martinique as perpetuated on a local and global scale over about a hundred and sixty years, from the abolition of slavery in the French colonies to the present status of Martinique as an overseas *département* of France. This historical unevenness is already indicated in the dead bodies mentioned, from the hung coolies on the plantations, to the drowning Chinese. To examine Chamoiseau's kinaesthetic registration of this historical unevenness of development in closer detail, we can consider the particular case of Arcadius, one of Marie-Sophie's lovers.

Marie-Sophie meets Arcadius in the event that General Charles de Gaulle visits Fort-de-France. They end up racing through the streets of the city together in order to chase down de Gaulle, so that Marie-Sophie can tell him about her shantytown (which she also names 'Texaco') and get his help with solving its infrastructural problems and getting its share of resources (p. 328). Arcadius stuns Marie-Sophie with his highly energetic body, so much so that she calls him a 'most fantastic drifter': 'I was lost in the drunkenness of Arcadius. He spun like a factory turbine and from walking drew the energy to walk. He spoke without ever pausing to breathe' (pp. 332-33). Yet as Chamoiseau's reference to the factory turbine indicates, we are shown that Arcadius' highly energetic movement exemplifies the exploitation of his body as a form of energy resource, for this movement is something that he is enslaved to, rather than it being under his control.

Marie-Sophie expresses Arcadius' enslavement to this energetic movement that he performs through his body in these terms: 'Arcadius who bled through his eyes and who marched, marched, marched, devoted to a cadence he didn't understand and which was slowly killing him' (p. 333). Here, we begin to get a sense that with Arcadius' highly energetic performance comes rapid energy depletion and consequently, expiration—Chamoiseau's expression of the exploitative forces of globalised development and its natural and human consequences. For Chamoiseau's depiction of Arcadius spinning like a factory turbine is reminiscent of the processes of sugar refinement in the sugar factories in early twentieth-century Martinique, which as we see in *Texaco*, fed the

appetites of City's transnational mulatto elite—white Creole descendents of old established colonial planter families. Arcadius' body movements also notate the energy consumption of the City's elite in the contemporary era, which now runs according to oil-fuelled automobility; the urban planner who visits Marie-Sophie's shantytown observes that developed City 'amplifies alimentary dependence, a fascination for the outside, and non-productive energy' (p. 347).

Arcadius' own premature, watery death further exemplifies the consequences of uneven globalised development on locally marginalised bodies. We are told that he is 'found drowned at the bottom of the fissure' after continually following the rivers' circuit and leaping into 'the rhythm of their foam', in the hope of 'melt[ing] into their secret in order to reach the sea' (p. 358). In this sense, Arcadius' relentless body movement re-performs the movements of slaves that were shipped to the Caribbean from Africa amid the Trans-Atlantic slave trade—recalling the exploitative 'development' of human bodies from other parts of the world into resource, for the exploitation of nature. Sourced as human labour 'for the cultivation of the New World'⁵⁵, African slave bodies were used for export production and the extraction of ecological resources such as sugar, tobacco, cacao, cattle hides and leather, timber, gold and diamonds⁵⁶.

Peter Linebaugh and Marcus Rediker also draw links between the eighteenth-century ship and the factory, recalling again Arcadius' bodily motion of drifting like a factory turbine:

The ship, whose milieu of action made it both universal and sui generis, provided a setting in which large numbers of workers cooperated on complex and synchronized tasks, under slavish, hierarchical discipline in which human will was subordinated to mechanical equipment, all for a money wage. The work, cooperation, and discipline of the ship made it a prototype of the factory.⁵⁷

⁵⁵ Patricia M. Muhammad, Esq., 'The Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade: A Forgotten Crime Against Humanity as Defined by International Law', *American University International Law Review*, 19.4 (2003), 883-947 (p. 890).

⁵⁶ John F. Richards, *The Unending Frontier: An Environmental History of the Early Modern World* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003), p. 406.

⁵⁷ Peter Linebaugh and Marcus Rediker, *The Many-Headed Hydra: Sailors, Slaves, Commoners, and the Hidden History of the Revolutionary Atlantic* (Boston: Beacon Press, 2000), pp. 149-50.

Linebaugh and Rediker further map the energetic movements of black slave bodies as they powered the global economies of the seventeenth, eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries:

the Atlantic proletariat of the seventeenth, eighteenth, and early nineteenth centuries [...] was *anonymous, nameless* [...] It was *mobile, transatlantic*. It powered industries of worldwide transportation. It left the land, migrating from country to town, from region to region, across the oceans, and from one island to another. It was *terrorized, subject to coercion*. Its hide was calloused by indentured labor, galley slavery, plantation slavery, convict transportation, the workhouse, the house of correction. Its origins were often traumatic: enclosure, capture, and imprisonment left lasting marks. [...] It was *planetary*, in its origins, its motions, and its consciousness. Finally, the proletariat was *self-active, creative*; it was—and is—alive; it is onamove.⁵⁸

This energetic state of being ‘onamove’, then, is the equivalent of Arcadius’ bodily performance of drifting. But it also exemplifies the African body’s enslavement to the resourceful dynamics of colonialist empire building—a precursor to Truman’s notion of contemporary globalised development.

Furthermore, we are told that there are deadly consequences of stopping a drifter in his tracks, which reinforces his enslavement to this energetic state of being onamove. As Papa Totone, the wiseman or ‘Mentoh’ (p. 51) of Texaco, cautions Marie-Sophie about her lover:

drifters can’t be stopped, to stop one is to kill one. He had to go all the way into the confines of himself, but those confines were so far away. If some did reach it, others did not. Most of them ended up at the Colson Hospital, and often one found their body in the middle of four paths: they had refused to choose, wishing to walk all four roads at the same time, everywhere forever. That would dislodge their guardian angel who would take flight, leaving the drifter’s body at a crossroads, quivering with the final extinction of the charm which once possessed it.

(pp. 358-59)

We see, then, that the drifter is so condemned to move to ‘the end of an edge of oneself’ (p. 359) that he actually reaches the point of near corporeal dislocation and consequently, death. These dislocated bodies of drifters therefore exemplify

⁵⁸ Linebaugh and Rediker, pp. 332-33.

the traumatic ‘dislocation of historical continuity’⁵⁹, when their ancestors were taken from Africa and shipped to the Caribbean as resources for colonial development and then left as waste matter after they have been physically exhausted of their bodily energy supply. To use Elizabeth M. DeLoughrey’s expression, these dislocated bodies manifest ‘the historical and economic *roots* for migrant *routes*’⁶⁰ but also, the futility of ‘attach[ing] themselves to their lost roots’⁶¹.

Yet these dislocated bodies—exploited into exile—are now situated in the Antilles and are becoming part of a more hybrid population and history. These are globalising processes that Chamoiseau has termed ‘creolization’. As he states in an interview: ‘the process of creolization refers to the widespread and brutal coming together of several anthropological groups—several languages, several phenotypes, several visions of the world, several [...] cuisines, music—everything—who, in less than three centuries—three or four centuries—were forced to produce new things’⁶². The meaning of the term ‘Creole’—used in the British, Dutch, French, and Hispanic Caribbean, and also parts of the North and Central American mainland, in much of South America, and in Sierra Leone—varies in different societies and over time.⁶³ Generally, the term ‘Creole’, referring to people and cultures, means something or somebody derived from the Old World but developed in the New, becoming culturally distinct from the Old World populations of their origin.⁶⁴ The concept of ‘creolisation’, then, refers to those processes of cultural change that give rise to such distinctiveness.⁶⁵

This process of creolisation is shown in *Texaco*, when after the abolition of slavery, we are told that ‘other models of slave’ (p. 138) were being sourced from other parts of the world, and these bodies were drifting into Martinique in

⁵⁹ Mary Gallagher, *Soundings in French Caribbean Writing Since 1950: The Shock of Space and Time* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), p. 11.

⁶⁰ Elizabeth M. DeLoughrey, *Routes and Roots: Navigating Caribbean and Pacific Island Literatures* (Honolulu: University of Hawai‘i Press, 2007), p. 26.

⁶¹ Olivia Sheringham, ‘From Creolization to Relation: An interview with Patrick Chamoiseau’, *Oxford Diasporas Programme*, 17 April 2012 <https://www.imi.ox.ac.uk/news/from-creolization-to-realization-an-interview-with-patrick-chamoiseau/patrickchamoiseau-interview_f.pdf> [accessed 27 May 2012].

⁶² *Ibid.*

⁶³ O. Nigel Bolland, ‘Creolisation and Creole Societies: a Cultural Nationalist View of Caribbean Social History’, *Caribbean Quarterly*, 44.1-2, 1-32 (p. 1).

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 1. See also Robin Cohen, ‘Creolization and Cultural Globalization: The Soft Sounds of Fugitive Power’, *Globalizations*, 4.3 (2007), 369-84.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 1.

ships over the Atlantic Ocean. Rendered through the eyes of Ninon, an old lover of Marie-Sophie's father, Esternome, Marie-Sophie narrates:

Ninon saw them get off the boat year after year. [...] She saw Portuguese arrive from the Madeira Islands. [...] Their bodies disappeared under a pile of dark cloth, tied in all directions like scarecrows. She saw coolies with black skin, and those from Calcutta, of a lighter cocoa-red. [...] Wrapped from top to bottom, they lived gathered up like a clump of pigeons and ate strange things. She saw the congos arrive. Calm, disciplined, they nevertheless looked like late-blooming maroons. She saw the hour when the chinese arrived under their pointy hats, inscrutable as cliffs and cleverer than their torturers.

(p. 138)

However, as seen from the dead bodies mentioned at the beginning of this section, these creole bodies are still marginalised in the contemporary local and global distribution of resources in Martinique. These bodies, historically dislocated from their places of origin under exploitative 'development', are still disposable and energetically depleted for the contemporary development of the island-state, amid its changing transnational relations not just with France, but also with other parts of the world.

After all, as Crystal Bartolovich observes, the name 'Texaco' alludes to the oil corporation's broad transnational reach, and 'developed' City is where the gasoline produced (from imported oil) by the coastal refineries is actually used.⁶⁶ In the novel, City's own 'dislocated' capitalist development is shown in its perpetual taste for foreign exports (whether in the form of goods, bodies, or imported oil transported by oil tankers, which recalls the turbine), as Marie-Sophie herself admits to this allure:

City [...] was the pedestal of the rare things which bettered life [...]: syrian shops, terylene cloth, the hair stylists, the lights, the clubs, the merchandise from France—that no trinket vendor could get from the islands—grabbed our attention more than the idea of a shoal of mules passing through crushed shark liver.

(p. 317)

⁶⁶ Crystal Bartolovich, 'Postcolonial Nature? Or "If Oil Could Speak, What Would It Say?"', in *What Postcolonial Theory Doesn't Say*, ed. by Anna Bernard, Ziad Elmarsafy and Stuart Murray (New York: Routledge, 2016), pp. 222-38 (p. 232).

At the same time, despite the imbrication of ‘City’ with global forces and the name ‘Texaco’ alluding to American oil corporations, it should be noted that Martinique’s status as a French Overseas Department since 1946 complicates the local politics of oil. Today, almost two-thirds of Martinique’s trade is with France; oil is no exception.⁶⁷

To elaborate how the relationship between global capitalism and the nation-state plays out in relation to the world’s demands for oil in the Caribbean, this relationship is complex and conflicted as the oil industry’s exploration, refining, and marketing is controlled by highly integrated, highly capitalised multinational corporations, while there is the nation-state also striving to assert itself and to distinguish between political independence and economic independence, and against this background the drama of energy use and the location of oil refineries in the region is carried out.⁶⁸ At the same time, though the politics of oil generally in the Caribbean have been strongly bound up with production for the U.S., this was not the case for the French islands.⁶⁹ There colonial elites viewed production for the local market as a strategic necessity in the Cold War period as well as being vital to development policy for the island, which kept Martinique solidly oriented towards Europe rather than the U.S.⁷⁰ Thus the bulk of the oil franchise in Martinique was held by French companies from the beginning.⁷¹ This is still the case, though a series of other oil transnationals, including Texaco, have held relatively small stakes at different times.⁷²

Chamoiseau’s naming of Marie-Sophie’s shantytown as ‘Texaco’, then, records the multiple scales of exploitation of the squatters at the level of the nation-state and that of global capitalism. Indeed, these oil refineries on the coasts of Martinique—where Marie-Sophie builds her shantytown in the novel—were located there not only because oil was imported to them, but also because earlier generations of elite urban dwellers in Fort de France thought of the

⁶⁷ ‘Martinique Trade at a Glance: Most Recent Values’, *World Integrated Trade Solution (WITS)* <<https://wits.worldbank.org/countrysnapshot/en/MTQ>> [accessed 27 August 2018].

⁶⁸ Vernon Mulhansingh, ‘The Location of Oil Refining in Latin America and the Caribbean’, *Revista Geográfica*, 75 (1971), 85-126 (pp. 85-86).

⁶⁹ Bartolovich, p. 232.

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 232. See also the ‘Historique’ section of La SARA, the French Caribbean oil conglomerate <<http://www.sara-antilles-guyane.com/historique/>> [accessed 27 August 2018].

⁷¹ *Ibid.*, p. 232.

⁷² *Ibid.*, p. 232.

waterfronts as ‘unhealthy, repulsive swamps’ and thus left them to ports, industry, and squatters.⁷³ In this way, ‘City’ establishes its local privilege by inserting itself into relations with France, capitalism—and oil—in particular ways.⁷⁴ But as I have shown, this has negative consequences for certain people in Caribbean society. Marie-Sophie notes how ‘City ignored us’: ‘The old Quarters held hands, going around City, families joined them, exchanges linked them. We wandered around City, going in to draw from it, going around it to live. We saw City from above, but in reality we lived at the bottom of its indifference which was often hostile’ (p. 317). Chamoiseau, therefore, shows how the dead and dislocated bodies around Marie-Sophie kinaesthetically register the exploitative forces of globalised development in relation to the exploitation of nature into resource, from colonialist empire building to its contemporary manifestation as neo-colonial international development.

A POETICS OF SALVAGE

Yet it is also in the figure of the drifter that Chamoiseau resurrects the symbol of slave resistance on the plantations—the maroon. Maroons were enslaved Africans in the Americas who struggle to achieve freedom through flight, in the face of overwhelming military odds on the part of their oppressors.⁷⁵ Maroons created independent groups and communities on the outskirts of slave societies, geographically situating themselves from areas slightly outside the borders of a plantation to the highest mountains of a region located as far away from plantation life as possible.⁷⁶ Maroon societies were created throughout the Black Atlantic, being particularly prevalent in Brazil, Jamaica, and Suriname.⁷⁷ While some communities existed for a few years, others persisted for centuries.⁷⁸

⁷³ Melanie Gidel, ‘Fragmentation on the Waterfront: Coastal Squatting Settlements and Urban Renewal Projects in the Caribbean’, in *Transforming Urban Waterfronts: Fixity and Flow*, ed. by Gene Desfor et al., (New York: Routledge, 2011), pp. 35-53 (p. 35). Cited in Bartolovich, p. 232.

⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 232.

⁷⁵ Alvin O. Thompson, *Flight to Freedom: African Runaways and Maroons in the Americas* (Jamaica: University of the West Indies Press, 2006), p. 1.

⁷⁶ Neil Roberts, *Freedom as Marronage* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2015), p. 4.

⁷⁷ Marjoleine Kars, ‘Maroons and Marronage’, *Oxford Bibliographies*, 30 August 2016 <<http://www.oxfordbibliographies.com/view/document/obo-9780199730414/obo-9780199730414-0229.xml>> [accessed 21 August 2018] (para. 1 of 2).

⁷⁸ *Ibid.* (para. 1).

Scholars generally distinguish two kinds of marronage. ‘Petit marronage’, or running away, refers to a strategy of resistance in which individuals or small groups, for a variety of reasons such as visiting a relative or love on a neighbouring plantation, escaped their plantations for a short period of days or weeks and then returned.⁷⁹ ‘Grand marronage’, much less prevalent, refers to people who removed themselves from their plantations permanently, and it was this form of marronage, with individual fugitives banding together to create independent communities of their own, that struck directly at the foundations of the plantation system, presenting military and economic threats that often taxed the colonists to their very limits.⁸⁰

Many maroons lived in a perpetual state of war.⁸¹ Colonisers generally wanted to wipe them out to prevent as yet enslaved people from joining them, and to put a stop to predatory attacks on plantations.⁸² Yet Chamoiseau draws attention to the agency of the maroon—rendering it through bodily kinaesthesia—to forward it as a source of resistance for Marie-Sophie. As Marie-Sophie reflects, after knowing about Arcadius’ death:

The drifter’s destiny is to carry us, all together, toward worlds buried in us. He assumed what we were all looking for and allowed us to look for it, without our having to suffer. The drifter, he was our desire for freedom in the flesh, our way of living worlds in ourselves, our City maroon.
(p. 359)

By embodying ‘our desire for freedom in the flesh’, the energetic motion of the drifter recognises the creole body as a potent source of energy for accessing its own embodied, lived experience of being historically dislocated—the ‘worlds buried in us’—and finding the means to perform its own agency to resist continual exploitation in the contemporary era. This begins to signify the ‘motor intentionality’ of the drifting creole body—‘the dynamic engagement of the body in a specific context that invites subjects to effect change’.⁸³

⁷⁹ Kars (para. 1). See also *Maroon Societies: Rebel Slave Communities in the Americas*, ed. by Richard Price, 3rd edn (Baltimore, Maryland: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1996).

⁸⁰ *Ibid.* (para. 1). See also Price, ‘Introduction: Maroons and Their Communities’, in *Maroon Societies: Rebel Slave Communities in the Americas*, pp. 1-32 (p. 3).

⁸¹ *Ibid.* (para. 1).

⁸² *Ibid.* (para. 1).

⁸³ Noland, p. 4.

As we have seen how Arcadius eventually meets his end, the bodily motion of drifting has connotations with water. I have argued in the previous section that Chamoiseau's comparison of Arcadius' drifting to the spinning of a factory turbine is reminiscent of the steam turbines used in sugar production in the Caribbean, as well as the slave ships—'the engine of commerce, the machine of empire'⁸⁴—drifting over the Atlantic Ocean and carrying bodies from Africa to the New World: exemplifying the exploitative 'development' of nature and of human bodies into resource. The image of the turbine is also carried on in the oil tankers that transport imported oil to the coastal refineries of Fort-de-France, fuelling 'developed' City's taste for foreign exports that continue to shape the island-state's uneven globalised development.

At the same time, drifting is also suggestive of driftwood—a form of marine debris that has lost its practical use as part of the structure of the slave ship, yet can still be considered as an important artefact for uncovering the dynamic and indivisible mode of interaction between body and resource matter in terms of energy. Indeed, if we consider how Ghanaian-born, Nigerian-based artist El Anatsui uses driftwood to construct his sculpture *Akua's Surviving Children* (1996)—his meditation on the Danish slave trade—a 'poetics of salvage' emerges from the singed driftwood logs of the artwork, that are assembled as 'a jaggy procession of young and grown, uncannily lifelike though sea-tumbled and faceless'⁸⁵. These repurposed driftwood logs remind us of the reciprocal and regenerative relationship between humans and nature in terms of energy that underlie practices of salvage, while also expressing the lived experiences of slaves in the Americas, as the artwork 'articulates tacit forms of community in the present, too, convened by labor or consumption'⁸⁶.

Chamoiseau shows the regenerative power of salvage practices through Marie-Sophie's labours of building her shantytown. Marie-Sophie's shantytown is itself constructed through her energetic salvaging of construction materials that have become City's garbage. We see how the energy levels of her body peak at

⁸⁴ Linebaugh and Rediker, p. 150.

⁸⁵ Chinnie Ding, 'El Anatsui', *Artforum*, 2011

<<https://www.artforum.com/picks/id=28479&view=print>> [accessed 26 May 2017] (para. 2 of 3).

⁸⁶ *Ibid.* (para. 2).

the moment of Texaco's genesis, as she drifts through City's streets looking for unwanted materials and finds new ways of recycling them for her shantytown:

I walked in the streets looking at the ground. From now on anything could be useful to me, a piece of string, the grace of a nail, an abandoned crate...anything could turn out to be something. My cunning bustling allowed me in the space of a few weeks to gather three crates, two new tin sheets, five slabs of cracked asbestos

(p. 299)

We also see how these salvage practices that Marie-Sophie enacts through her body quickly 'develops' the infrastructure of Texaco, which in turn has political effects: 'Then things went very fast. My hutch attracted other hutches [...] hanging on to mine were already two dozen hutches in different stages of *development* (italics mine) [...] In a few months we had become autonomous' (p. 300).

Indeed, this act of salvaging resource matter also becomes the constant motion that directs the upkeep of Texaco. This is because Marie-Sophie and her fellow inhabitants face numerous 'assault[s]' (p. 369) from City, for building their shantytown next to the Texaco company oil reservoirs that are managed by a *béké*—a white Creole. We are told that the police and, subsequently, the brutish C.R.S. (Compagnie Républicaine De Sécurité, pronounced 'seyaress' by Marie-Sophie) come and tear down their hutches over and over again:

The seyaress (Hitler's old henchmen whom the *békés* had ordered into the Colonies especially for us, one rumor had it) barged into the hutches, unwedging doors and throwing out tables, sheets, bed rags, children, and all kinds of things. As soon as they emptied a hutch, the soulless-blackmen would go at it with crowbars, smashing the crate wood, splintering the asbestos. They unnailed the tin sheets, laughing like dumb beasts, and threw them down the hill.

(p. 306)

The bodies of Marie-Sophie and her fellow inhabitants also bear the markings of these constant assaults: 'We resisted at the price of intimate collapses translated in wrinkles, in stains in the pupils. Fatigue softened our bones. Our foreheads bore folds of bitterness.' (p. 336) And in the face of such violent dismantling of their hutches, Chamoiseau shows that Marie-Sophie and her fellow inhabitants repeatedly salvage the remnants of their destroyed hutches to rebuild their

shantytown: ‘We could only go back up, hang on to our so precious tin sheets, to our asbestos slabs whose every crack broke our hearts. Nothing to do besides holding tight.’ (p. 307)

Through these embodied movements of drifting and salvaging resource matter as performed by Marie-Sophie and her fellow inhabitants of Texaco, Chamoiseau shows that these creole bodies resist their historical exploitation by modifying the bodily behaviour of the drifter and tapping into their own bodies as energy resources through practices that are mindful of the reciprocal and regenerative relationship between humans and nature. Their bodily labours in building Texaco recycle the ‘dirty’ energy of neo-colonial development that configures them as disposable human waste into ‘clean’ energy, signifying the motor intentionality of their embodied resistance. The ecological diversity of Texaco attests to this clean energy:

When we came, we brought the countryside with us: carts of lemon trees, swaying coconut trees, bunches of papaya trees, tufts of sugarcane, tatters of plantains, guavas, peppers, lichees, the blessed breadfruit, the avocado trees, and a mixture of this grass and that grass to cure the aches, the heart’s sufferings, the soul’s wounds, the dreamy flowerings of melancholy.

(p. 317)

Indeed, these fresh crops that are cultivated in Texaco stand in stark contrast to the deformed vegetables in ‘Pterodactyl’. And as the final lines of the extract above suggest, Texaco’s crops become in themselves energetic matter that hold the key to their gardeners’ lifeworlds and particular, lived experiences, as evidenced by how Marie-Sophie and other people from other Quarters bring homegrown foodstuff with them when waiting to meet De Gaulle—Marie-Sophie’s own food is ‘sprinkled with parsley grown in Texaco’—in the hope of ‘exposing their misfortune to him’ (pp. 328-29).

In a similar sense, the ecological diversity of Texaco energetically exemplifies the cultural diversity of its inhabitants who live together and support one another in their ‘stoneworks of survival, Creole space of brand new solidarities’ (p. 320). Having drifted into Fort-de-France from various parts of the world—forcibly dislocated from their homelands and transplanted into the New World—these bodies are now ‘*called to invent the new cultural designs*

*allowing for a relative cohabitation between them*⁸⁷. In Chamoiseau's novel, we are shown how these 'new cultural designs' are cultivated through ecologically mindful practices that shape the very infrastructure and ecological culture of Texaco:

No waste of space in Texaco. Every last centimeter was good for something. No private land, no collective land, we weren't the landowners, so no one could pride himself on anything besides the number of hours, minutes, seconds of this arrival. [...] But if the first one had a good spot, he could only, on that good God's land, contemplate the settlement of the other; he even had to help him, for (he who sows well, harvests well) we were, in that battle to live, worried about our harvests. Each hutch, day after day, supported the other and so on.

(pp. 318-19)

Such embodied practices of ecological cultivation and awareness kinaesthetically register the clean energy that Chamoiseau sees the creolisation of these bodies as generating—putting forward alternative, sustainable practices of development that recognise the reciprocity between humans and nature.

PLANTING AND ANCHORAGE

Consequently, we see that these embodied ecological practices have political effects. Chamoiseau suggests that this generation of clean energy through the diverse bodies that have drifted into Fort-de-France can empower an *organised* resistance against historical and contemporary exploitation of these bodies in the name of colonial and neo-colonial globalised development. After all, it is in Texaco that Marie-Sophie is able to consolidate a 'maroon gang [...] in the midst of battle' (p. 315). Marie-Sophie's further observation that the hutches of her shantytown make up 'our very own Texaco, a company in the business of survival' (p. 24) also references her shantytown's exemplification of an alternative organisation of development and power—a 'countercity' (p. 361). For an important element of this organised resistance is the fact that the bodies that make up this maroon gang have now 'planted' themselves at the coasts of Martinique, right next to the oil reservoirs, instead of drifting in and out of the

⁸⁷ Jean Barnabé, Patrick Chamoiseau and Raphaël Confiant, *Éloge de la Créolité*, trans. by M.B. Taleb-Khyar (Paris: Éditions Gallimard, 1993), p. 92.

island-state, which also suggests a kind of motor intentionality. These people are growing new roots of Creoleness that counter the ‘dislocated’, unsustainable development of City, signifying the modification of their bodily behaviour.

This vision that Chamoiseau offers of diverse peoples from different cultural backgrounds all newly situated in the Caribbean but sharing a colonial history, and being active agents in creating a politically independent, collective identity that resists such exploitation, underlies the concept of Créolité that he and two other Martinican writers, Jean Bernabé and Raphaël Confiant, forwarded in an essay *Éloge de la créolité* (In Praise of Creoleness) in 1989. *Éloge de la créolité* was written as a response to the perceived inadequacies of Négritude—a literary and ideological movement of the thirties and forties led by French-speaking black writers and intellectuals from France’s colonies in Africa and the Caribbean territories that reclaimed African self-determination, self-reliance, and self-respect to combat French imperialism—for reaffirming Martiniquan creole identity in opposition to such metropolitan French structures in a new way.⁸⁸ The Créolistes felt that Négritude was ineffective for resistance because it replaced one construction of the self—the notion that Antillean identity is constitutively European—with another, the idea that Antillean identity is essentially Africa: ‘A violent and paradoxical therapy, Négritude replaced the illusion of Europe by an African illusion.’⁸⁹ Both these Eurocentric and Afrocentric mirages repressed the *mélange* of Creole culture—its open-ended, multiple identity.⁹⁰

In turn, Chamoiseau and his collaborators mobilise the creole language—the language developed by seventeenth-century African slaves in contact with European slave masters and Carib Indians—in their works to represent and give voice to Antillean identity, activating Créolité as a full-fledged literary movement in the process.⁹¹ *Texaco* is a celebrated example of Créolité in action, capturing and documenting the oral histories of these marginalised peoples, as

⁸⁸ Bertrade Ngo-Ngijol Banoum, ‘Négritude’, *Africana Age: African & African Diasporan Transformations in the 20th Century* <<http://exhibitions.nypl.org/africanaage/essay-negritude.html>> [accessed 22 August 2018] (para. 1 of 26). See also Sam Coombes, ‘The genesis, reception, and aftermath of the *créolité* movement in the Francophone Caribbean: Creole identity and creolisation re-examined’, *Francosphères*, 1.2 (2012), 105-26.

⁸⁹ Bernabé, Chamoiseau and Confiant, p. 82.

⁹⁰ Lucien Taylor, ‘Créolité Bites: A conversation with Patrick Chamoiseau, Raphaël Confiant, and Jean Bernabé’, *Transition*, 71 (1997), 124-61 (p. 128). See also Jarrod Hayes, ‘Créolité’, *The Columbia History of Twentieth-Century French Thought*, ed. by Lawrence D. Kritzman (New York: Columbia University Press, 2006), pp. 23-25.

⁹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 129.

we have seen from Marie-Sophie's narration of her labours in building her shantytown and her combats with City. While much has been made of the linguistic inventiveness of Chamoiseau's writing in rendering these histories, he and his collaborators also critically remind us that these histories are contextualised in the embodied, lived experiences of these people:

Creoleness is the *interactional or transactionnal aggregate* of Caribbean, European, African, Asian, and Levantine cultural elements, united on the same soil by the yoke of history. For three centuries the islands and parts of continents affected by this phenomenon proved to be the real forges of a new humanity, where languages, races, religions, customs, ways of being from all over the world were brutally uprooted and transplanted in an environment where they had to reinvent life. Our Creoleness was, therefore, born from this extraordinary 'migan', wrongly and hastily reduced to its mere linguistic aspects, or to one single element of its composition. [...] So that, concerning Creoleness, of which we have only the deep intuition or the poetic knowledge, and so as not to neglect any one of its many possible ways, we say that it ought to be approached as *a question to be lived*, to be lived obstinately in each light, in each shadow of our mind.⁹²

Besides the power of the creole language to represent these lived experiences, the Créolistes also argue for 'interior vision' that is sensitive to the embodied aspect of these experiences:

To create the conditions of authentic expression amounted also to exorcising the old fatality of exteriority. Having only the Other's pupils under one's eyelids invalidated the fairest approaches, processes, and procedures. Opening one's eyes on oneself [...] was not enough. We had yet to wash our eyes, to turn over the vision we had of our reality in order to grasp its truth: a new look capable of taking away our nature from the secondary or peripheral edge so as to place it again in the center of ourselves [...] This is the kind of free look which, having no outside spectators, can do without self-explanations or comments. It emerges from the projection of our being and considers each part of our reality as an event in order to break the way it is traditionally viewed [...] To learn again how to visualize our depths. To learn again how to look positively at what revolves around us. [...] It is an inner disruption⁹³

⁹² Bernabé, Chamoiseau and Confiant, pp. 87-89.

⁹³ *Ibid.*, pp. 85-86.

It is in this chapter, therefore, that I have chosen to focus primarily on how Chamoiseau represents the particular, lived experiences and resistance practices of these marginalised people in *Texaco* through bodily kinaesthesia.

To elaborate on how Chamoiseau renders resistance practices of this new creole collective through bodily kinaesthesia and motor intentionality, he shows how this act of planting one's body in the space of creolisation enables organised resistance through Marie-Sophie's observation that in contradistinction to the tendency of Texaco's male inhabitants to drift and thus exacerbate the vulnerability of the shantytown against City's assaults, Texaco's female inhabitants and 'their lines of children' who are not 'so mobile on the good Lord's earth' by necessity need to set up a site of habitation where they can stayed rooted and survive:

The men treaded light on this earth. When they weren't just going through, they lived lightly in the hutch, shied away from the billy clubs and watched the partitions being smashed without skipping a heartbeat. Some disappeared when the police onslaughts became so constant that a blood red stained our eyes. Those who remained seemed to bow to fate. They felt they had no right to assert their presence and practiced a supple detachment, out of reach of daily misfortunes.

[...] We had to wage the battle alone, because the men [...] would not organize anything, would not *plant* anything; they would forever entertain a temporary contact with this earth (*italics mine*). So we began to organize.

(p. 336)

From the extract above, we see that the drifting motion of the male, Creole body is once again connected to the onamove dynamics of colonial and neo-colonial development. For in one sense, the 'supple detachment' of the male Creole body energetically registers its subservience to the powerful and repeated trope of colonialist empire building—often referenced in eighteenth and nineteenth century British literature—that DeLoughrey highlights, of the Christian, European self-made male who drifts across the oceans of the world and accidentally colonises a desert isle.⁹⁴ In another sense, the fact that Creole men could 'tread light on this earth', as opposed to Creole women, also exemplifies their greater mobility than women even when enslaved.

⁹⁴ DeLoughrey, p. 14.

Citing Arlette Gautier, Alvin O. Thompson notes that one of the reasons for there being fewer female than male Maroons is because ‘men enjoyed much greater mobility than women, since they were assigned to work as messengers, fishermen, traders, dock-workers, artisans, military cohorts, scouts, baggage carriers and so on’⁹⁵. This greater mobility of male African slaves in the Americas contrasts with the circumstances of female slaves:

Among these were the need to take care of their very young children, who might not have survived the rigours of the flight from slavery to freedom; [...] the suspicion that would have attended a woman being seen alone in the bush or with very young children; the risk of being raped by men of all colours; and the difficulties of negotiating through certain kinds of terrain.⁹⁶

Yet the two interpretations that I have offered of the drifting male Creole body together expose the underlying assumption of the male body as an independent energy resource that re-energises itself through the very motion of its drifting—like the steam turbine of the sugar factories, which recall the factory-like slave ship, as well as its present-day manifestation as the oil tankers that drift into the waterfronts of Fort-de-France, transporting imported oil from other parts of the world for the consumption of developed City. To recall how Arcadius’s body movement is described as ‘from walking drew the energy to walk’, there is an implied independence underlying this movement—an automobility that is assumed to replenish itself, but which suppresses its inherent unsustainability. This is an assumption that both perpetuates the colonialist trope of the European, self-made male and restricts the emancipatory potential of male *marronage* for resisting the exploitative forces underpinning contemporary neo-colonial development.

Chamoiseau, however, offers an alternative mode of resistance by unhinging the notion of *marronage* from this masculinised and energy-depleting motion of drifting, and re-routing and re-rooting the source of energy for this resistance in the female Creole body instead. Through his militaristic description of the ‘lines of children’ that the female inhabitants of Texaco are supposedly

⁹⁵ Arlette Gautier, *Les Soeurs de Solitude: La condition féminine dans l’esclave aux Antilles du XVIIe au XIXe siècle* (Paris: Editions Caribéennes, 1985), pp. 229, 235-38. Cited in Thompson, p. 72.

⁹⁶ Thompson, p. 72.

encumbered with, Chamoiseau reconfigures the reproductive resources of the Creole female body as mobilising a mode of organised, *grassroots* resistance. This feminised grassroots resistance still has ‘submarine roots’⁹⁷, as seen in Marie-Sophie’s description of her attempts to ground Arcadius through the erotic movements of their bodies:

In order to cure him of his love of drifting [...] I forced myself to melt us into each other, to give him *anchor* (italics mine). My papaya turned into an octopus to suck him up and hold him there.

(p. 357)

But by planting or anchoring itself on the coasts of Fort-de-France, the female Creole body modifies its behaviour to resist the co-option and global distribution of its energy via the drifting slave ships and oil tankers, showing its motor intentionality to effect change.

After all, it is on the ‘intermediating topography’⁹⁸ that is the beach that slave ships and oil tankers run aground and become inactive—unable to be utilised for the exploitative extraction and depletion of energy from various parts for the world that fuels colonial and neo-colonial development. If we return to the material of driftwood and also remember the energetic motion of diverse bodies that are drifting into and disembarking upon the shores of Fort-de-France from ships and boats, it is also on the beach that (as DeLoughrey reminds us) we see the emergence of a ‘contact zone’—a ‘space of beginnings and endings...the frontiers and boundaries of islands’⁹⁹. Chamoiseau connects the process of creolisation to the embarkation point of the beach thus:

Our *anchorage* in this land is not a dive into a bottomless pit. [...] once our Creoleness is placed at the center of our creativity, we will be able to re-examine our existence, to perceive in it the mechanisms of alienation, and, above all, to grasp its beauty¹⁰⁰ (italics mine).

⁹⁷ Edouard Glissant, *Caribbean Discourse: Selected Essays*, trans. by Michael J. Dash (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1999), p. 67.

⁹⁸ Linebaugh and Rediker, p. 130.

⁹⁹ DeLoughrey, p. 14.

¹⁰⁰ Barnabé, Chamoiseau and Confiant, p. 99.

A feminised Creole resistance thus enters into ‘subterranean convergence’¹⁰¹ with the historically dislocated peoples of the Caribbean—an alternative organisation of bodily energy that is reproductive in its development, countering the earlier referenced ‘non-productive energy’ of City.

We have earlier seen this reproductive energy of a feminised Creole resistance in the development of Texaco’s infrastructure, as Marie-Sophie’s hutch becomes an anchor point for other hutches: ‘Evidently, people had settled *around me*: a living space bigger than the others made my home the nucleus of Upper Texaco.’ (p. 362) It is important to note, however, that while energised by the reproductive potential of the female body, Chamoiseau is careful not to bind this feminised Creole resistance to an essentialist conception of the female body as a vessel of fertility. For Marie-Sophie, who is the ‘center of this resistance’ (p. 341), is herself barren. Chamoiseau thus resists submitting women’s reproductive bodies as bearing the responsibility of ethnic and racial regeneration¹⁰²—a move that arguably mirrors the energy independence of the male body—by showing instead Marie-Sophie’s acknowledgement of her body’s energetic communion with nature as part of her alternative development practices.

We have already begun to see this acknowledgement in Marie-Sophie’s sense of her resistance as a kind of ‘planting’ practice, which is also echoed in her description of her setting up her first hutch in Texaco:

On the slope, like Esternome taught me, I *planted* my four bamboo sticks, which I then wrapped with canvas. Then I carefully weeded my space, packed down the land within my tent, made the logwood in the area stand aside in a four-meter radius.

(p. 297)

Another instance of this acknowledgement can be seen in Marie-Sophie’s own *marronage* practice of ‘always returning, always, as often as possible toward my anchor point, my very own Texaco [...]—my life’s gasoline’ (p. 312) even while she worked in City. Here, the reference to Texaco as an anchor point echoes that of Marie-Sophie’s attempt to use her own body as an anchor for the drifting Arcadius, thus configuring the shantytown as an important site for this feminised Creole resistance. But in terming Texaco as ‘her life’s gasoline’, Marie-Sophie

¹⁰¹ Glissant, p. 134.

¹⁰² DeLoughrey, p. 143.

reconfigures the terms of energy dependence between body and resource matter, by showing a relation that does not depend on, to recall Donna Haraway from the previous chapter, ‘the appropriation of nature as resource for the productions of culture’¹⁰³. It is this re-configuration that Chamoiseau ultimately suggests is important for alternative, sustainable practices of development that do not exploit human bodies and nature as energy resources.

After all, we are told that what drives Marie-Sophie to set up her shantytown at the oil reservoirs is her sense that this is the location where she can ‘understand’ City: ‘I began to listen to City, to better fill myself with the gasoline smell. I felt like talking to people’ (p. 295). Indeed, Chamoiseau shows kinaesthetic awareness of the dynamic and indivisible mode of interaction between body and resource material, as earlier in the novel, we see that the smell of gasoline ‘wakes up’ Marie-Sophie’s unconscious body: ‘The gasoline smell made me open my eyes. A persistent smell going through your bones.’ (p. 286) ‘Planting’ herself next to the oil reservoirs on the coasts of Fort-de-France, Marie-Sophie is able to live in the midst of the material waste that developed City generates but which it ignores:

I saw how the reservoir tanks looked like red glands connecting a metallic hand. I saw the pipes rush into the sea, the trucks coming and going through the piles of barrels. I saw the barrel boat which filled the tanks. I heard workers in a tizzy on account of gas leaks or spurts of gasoline that turned the soil blue. I watched the place fall asleep under the tall cliff in its cradle of smells.

(p. 295)

Marie-Sophie’s proximity to the oil reservoirs, then, enables her to be ‘alert to the inevitable contingency of human and environmental survival’, which contrasts what Sarah K. Harrison calls ‘the possessive, exploitative ideology of those who trade in natural resources’¹⁰⁴. Beyond this, Marie-Sophie’s alternative development practices result in the oil tankers coming less and less, until the oil company is forced to cease operations: ‘Texaco, the oil company which used to occupy that space and which had given its name to it, had left aeons ago. It had

¹⁰³ Donna J. Haraway, *Simians, Cyborgs, and Women: The Reinvention of Nature* (New York: Routledge, 1991), p. 150.

¹⁰⁴ Sarah K. Harrison, *Waste Matters: Urban margins in contemporary literature* (Oxford: Routledge, 2017), p. 27.

picked up its barrels, carted off its reservoirs, taken apart its tankers' sucking pipes, and left' (p. 24). This is the material effect of Marie-Sophie's resistance practice as powered by the 'motor intentionality' of her body that also begins to affect the local-global dynamic.

INTO THE CAVE'S BELLY

We have seen that Marie-Sophie's resistance practices of salvage and of 'planting' herself on the coasts of Martinique—even as they are mindful of the reciprocal and regenerative relationship between humans and nature—are enacted through her own body that is always under physical threat, as she is simultaneously exploited as human resource under neo-colonial development amidst these ongoing battles with City. Recalling the dead bodies surrounding Marie-Sophie, the energy demands placed on these people who are exploited and marginalised can have fatal consequences. For bodies that are so depleted of energy as to be in a state of near extinction, then, like the skeletal and malnourished tribals of Pirtha, the question might be asked: do they still have agency and can they enact resistance?

Despite the tribals' precarious state of existence, Devi suggests that tribal resistance is possible. For even as these bodies' malnourished states reveal their exploitation under contemporary globalised development, Devi shows them to perform their own practices that resist such exploitation and energy depletion. I will show how such practices—wherein the tribals repurpose the resource material of stone—are in part fuelled by what Devi herself calls the 'unquiet soul' of dead bodies, of which the arrival of a pterodactyl as the physical manifestation of the tribal ancestral spirit is an example. I will elaborate on the pterodactyl as an energetic mode of tribal resistance and address the physicality of the creature (which can be contentious) in the final section of this chapter.

In her long story, Devi shows the tribals to be persistently tapping into sources from their tribal past, with reference to the geographical features of their own ancient lands. An example of this can be seen in how the stones surrounding the tribal settlements are believed to be the womenfolk related to ancient warriors who never returned, who were themselves, then, petrified into stone

‘looking for their way back’ (p. 145) By rendering these stones as energetically exemplifying the ‘unquiet souls’ of these womenfolk, Devi shows how such tribal practices revises an instrumentalist understanding of nature and of bodies. In this light, she calls for kinaesthetic awareness of the wasting flesh of these tribal bodies not as depleted, but from the tribals’ instinctive recognition of body matter itself as renewable.

This viewpoint of the body itself as renewable can be realised in the tribals’ traditional burial practices. As Shankar tells Puran: ‘We give to Pirtha’s waters the bones of our dead at the end of the mourning time.’ (p. 151) Even as in modern India, the tribals are forced to adapt their practices according to the Hindu majority’s funeral practices of cremation, effectively eradicating the ecological communion of decomposing flesh that is buried in the ground, this sense of the renewability of the body is still adhered to, as Shankar states: ‘Now we can’t bury them anymore, we burn them. Then we put the ashes in a new bowl and bury them, put up a stone.’ (p. 151) Death for the tribals, then, is not a finite end whereby all energy is extracted from the body. Rather, the body in death, buried or cremated, is in energetic congregation with the ecological environment.

It is through this kinaesthetic awareness of the regenerative, energetic congregation between body and ecological environment that Devi suggests the mobilisation of a tribal mode of resistance, even when these marginalised bodies are forced into near extinction. We are told that, due to the ‘oppressive tactics of the state government of Madhya Pradesh’ that facilitate the uneven local and global distribution of resources, the adivasis have now been forced to retreat into their dark caves:

In Abujhmar there is a huge depression in the rock like a well, or like a monster’s bowl. The sunlight never reaches its belly fully. The Adivasis live in the land of that primordial dusk. In some remote day they were invaded and they crawled into the earth’s womb for safety, never to emerge.

(p. 109)

These bodily movements of retreating into caves can connote a form of death, as Puran reflects on the fact that ‘the crisis of the menaced existence of the tribals, of the extinction of their ethnic being, pushed and pushed them toward the dark’

(p. 193). Devi's depiction of these stone caves as unsatiated bellies also gestures towards the wiping out of the adivasis due to starvation.

Yet, as kinaesthetic registrations of the regenerative, energetic congregation between their bodies and the ecological environment in death, the tribals' movement of retreating into their caves can also be understood as a practice—even a tactic—of energy preservation that resists the exploitation of their bodies as energy resources. In this way, the tribals modify their bodily behaviour for resistance. This tribal practice of energy preservation is a sacral and regenerative one, in that it draws upon the muscular energies of bodies already dead through the tribals' own energetic motions of carving pictures on cave stone. Devi renders the energies of these dead bodies through the drawings that Puran sees on the walls of the cave that becomes the burial site of the pterodactyl. These drawings have a kinaesthetic energy to them, as evidenced by Puran's description:

Drums beat from the smooth stone, one hears the clamor of the dance.

With great care and over time, who has engraved dancing men and women, drum, flute, the khoksar to keep the beat? Peacock, elephant, deer, bird, snake, naked child, tree, Khajra tree, bow and arrow, spear.

The human beings are larger than life, the animals and birds small, the trees large again. Who carved these pictures, filling the cave wall for how long?

Do these pictures date from the time when Bikhia's people were free, and the animal kingdom was their dominion, beasts of prey? When the forest was mother and nurse?

[...] The men wear earrings. The women are ornamented, apparently they used to wear ornaments of catachou wood at one time. To what period do these pictures belong?

Or is it that Bikhia and his people carve pictures to capture that past life?

(p. 175)

Depicting dancing bodies of the past, these cave drawings preserve the muscular energies of bodies on stone—'drums beat from the smooth stone'.

These preserved bodily energies 'feed' the starving tribals who are themselves near death, fuelling their mode of resistance against the energy extraction practices of international development. This sense of 'feeding' is conveyed in the fact that these drawings are carved onto stone with tribal cooking tools, as Devi shows with Bikhia's (a tribal boy who is the pterodactyl's designated guardian) own engraving of the pterodactyl on a stone tablet: 'Bikhia

has engraved the picture on stone with some kind of small hammer and chisel, like the ones used to prepare the spice grinding stone' (p. 148) Devi's choice to describe Bikhia's engraving of the pterodactyl as a picture that is 'carved' (p. 148) into the surface of stone also has associations with food, as Kirshenblatt-Gimblett notes that the word 'carve' is suggestive of meat¹¹⁴. Through kinaesthetic awareness of the sacral energetic congregation of body and ecological environment, then, as rendered through the tribal practice of carving drawings on stone, Devi shows how tribal bodies past and present together generate a kind of renewable energy that becomes an independent source of resistance against energy-depleting, exploitative practices of neo-colonial development.

This renewable energy that is generated through tribal bodies past and present—gestured through the dancing bodies of these cave drawings—subsequently counteracts the depleted energy of the documentary films mentioned earlier in this chapter. If we recall how Devi renders these documentary films as the equivalent of 'pathological' laboratory samples of the tribals' rotting flesh, these films exemplify the exploitation of these bodies' energy for contemporary globalised development as human resource. In her study of the political aesthetics of adivasi photography, and considering the Indian photographer Sunil Janah's work in particular, Rashmi Varma raises this point: 'Even when the tribal is at the centre of Janah's framing, s/he is at the margins of the nation's framing of belonging and citizenship'¹¹⁵. That Devi depicts these tribals as receding into their dark caves show the tribal body as being ever edged out of 'the nation's framing of belonging and citizenship'—a movement of expulsion that Devi notably conveys in geologic terms: 'The new era in this history of the world began when, at the end of the Mesozoic era, India broke off from the main mass of Gondwanaland' (p. 99). But in presenting these engravings of dancing bodies on cave walls that are carved by Bikhia and his people, Devi readjusts the frame on these mute tribal bodies in energetic motion,

¹¹⁴ Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, p. 6.

¹¹⁵ Rashmi Varma, 'Prior to erasure: Looking for adivasis in photographs', in *Political Aesthetics: Culture, critique and the everyday*, ed. by Arundhati Virmani (Oxford: Routledge, 2016), pp. 106-126 (p. 118).

at work in kinaesthetically ‘tell[ing] their own stories’¹¹⁶ of tribal lived, particular experiences.

Beyond this, if we consider again the tools of hammer and chisel that Bikhia uses to produce these cave drawings, these tools themselves also indicate the tribals’ solidarity with their ecological environment as well as potential practices for what the anthropologist Beatriz Huertas Castillo, who studies uncontacted peoples in the Peruvian Amazon, calls ‘autonomous development’. Castillo observes:

A process of autonomous development implies that the defining of needs, the planning and implementation of actions should be controlled by the indigenous people themselves. These actions will need to be aimed at achieving a people’s economic independence by using resources in a way that is appropriate to ensuring its continuity. They must be capable of strengthening the identity and unity of the people as a culturally differentiated society.¹¹⁷

Devi shows the tribals’ use of these tools of hammer and chisel as integral to the material conditions of their survival, for the tribals’ production of these cave drawings is not out of a conscious sense of making art, but rather, these stone engravings are a standard feature of tribal homes, as Harisharan informs Puran:

Listen, friend, they engrave pictures in that way inside their homes. They know all that. They carved the surfaces of the stone steps they built quite in the same way, so that they don’t slip and fall. This work they know.
(p. 148)

That Harisharan and Puran begin to consider the development of a cottage industry out of the tribal art of using the chisel in this way (p. 148) suggests alternative practices of sustainability that are kinaesthetically aware of the regenerative relationship between human bodies and nature. This is not to overstate the effectiveness of tribal resistance against their exploitation, but as Castillo suggests, a conception of autonomous development is contingent on the recognition of tribal agency, which an instrumentalist view of bodies and of nature under neo-colonial development does not. Devi’s presentation of these

¹¹⁶ Varma, p. 112.

¹¹⁷ Beatriz Huertas Castillo, *Indigenous Peoples in Isolation in the Peruvian Amazon: Their Struggle for survival and freedom* (Copenhagen: International Work Group for Indigenous Affairs (IWGIA), 2004), p. 169.

tribal practices of stone carving, then, alerts us to the motor intentionality of these tribal bodies as they modify their bodily behaviour to enact practices that are mindful of the reciprocal and regenerative relationship of energy between humans and nature, resisting their exploitation as ‘human resources’.

PTERODACTYL

The tribals’ practices of resistance and energy preservation have, however, greater effects. In this final section, I will consider how Devi shows the powerful effects of the motor intentionality of the resisting tribal body through her presentation of the physical manifestation of a pterodactyl in Pirtha.

We are told that amid Puran’s investigation of the man-made famine in Pirtha, there are rumours of the appearance of a flying creature—variously described as an ‘unearthly terror’ (p. 95), a ‘monstrous shadow’ (p. 103), and ‘a bird’ (p. 103)—that the tribals have spotted in their time of emergency. Correspondingly, we are told that to the tribals, the pterodactyl is an embodied manifestation of ‘the unquiet soul of their ancestors’ (p. 128). That the pterodactyl’s arrival to the besieged tribal community of Pirtha exemplifies a mode of resistance that is unique to their prehistoric understanding of sacral nature, is ultimately suggested through Puran’s reflection that the pterodactyl signifies a ‘new *myth*’ that belongs solely to the tribals and cannot be co-opted by external forces: ‘Now something has happened that is their very own, a thing beyond the reach and understanding and grasp and invasion and plunder of the outsider.’ (p. 193) This sense of the pterodactyl as the manifestation of a new myth begins to suggest alternative practices of ‘autonomous development’ that are attentive to the local, particular, lived experiences of the marginalised tribals.

To understand how the pterodactyl’s manifestation suggests alternative autonomous development practices forwarded by the tribals, I contend that we need to recognise the pterodactyl as corporeal. This is because the tribals themselves experience the creature as such. However as Devi renders the pterodactyl in mythic terms, it is understandable that the pterodactyl of her long story tends to be analysed by various critics as a spectral or fantastic presence.

Parama Roy identifies the pterodactyl as:

a paradigmatic animal, an instance of what [Akira] Lippit has identified as the ‘spectral animal’ of modernity, existing in a state of ‘*perpetual vanishing*’ in the face of the steadily encroaching onslaught of a modern world featuring an instrumentalist and technologically ruthless humanity.¹¹⁹

David Farrier casts the pterodactyl as an ‘impossible monster’¹²⁰—the uncanny expression of the ‘conjunction of the gothic and the forces of capitalism’¹²¹. Neil Lazarus reads Devi’s pterodactyl as diegetically manifesting ‘the *content* of subaltern consciousness’, whereby even as the creature takes on ‘fleshly form in an unavailing attempt to convey its message to the living generations, it prepares to recede once more into immateriality’¹²². In their own ways, these three interpretations are attentive to the shifting corporeality of the pterodactyl and its mythical implications.

Yet even as Roy, Farrier, and Lazarus each offer incisive insights regarding the mythical implications of Devi’s pterodactyl, their analyses prematurely spectralise the pterodactyl’s bodily presence. This premature spectralisation of the pterodactyl seems to be based on these critics’ selective focus of the *living flesh* of the pterodactyl as a marker of its embodied presence which, in light of the creature’s final moments—‘The body seemed slowly to sink down, a body crumbling on its four feet, the head on the floor, [...] the body suddenly begins to tremble steadily (p. 180)—presumes that nothing corporeal is left behind in the event of its physical death. To recall Lazarus’ description, the pterodactyl ‘recede[s] once more into immateriality’—a conclusion that he draws from Devi’s own description of the scene: ‘Bikhia is witnessing that their ancestors’ soul embodied itself and flew in one day, and now it’s *leaving its form and returning*’ (italics mine) (p. 180). Underpinning Lazarus’ interpretation of the tribals’ ancestral soul ‘leaving its form and returning’ as a recession into immateriality, then, is his understanding of ‘leaving’ as exiting.

¹¹⁹ Parama Roy, *Alimentary Tracts: Appetites, Aversions, and The Postcolonial* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2010), p. 140.

¹²⁰ David Farrier, ‘Disaster’s Gift’, *Interventions*, 18.3 (2016), 450-66 (p. 459).

¹²¹ *Ibid.*, p. 456.

¹²² Neil Lazarus, *The Postcolonial Unconscious* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), pp. 155-56.

But what if we understood ‘leaving’ as remaining instead? After all, in her long story, Devi does not depict the actual death of the pterodactyl but chooses to indicate the fact only through the reactions of Puran and Bikhia—the tribal boy designated as the guardian of the creature—to this event:

About an hour later Puran says, ‘Gone.’
Bikhia is still.
Bikhia is still, unmoving, immobile.
They sit, the two of them sit.

(p. 180)

Can we account for the pterodactyl’s bodily form of *dying flesh* that is left behind in the shrine room, and still gather from this dying flesh a sense of energetic resistance, given Puran’s understanding (seen in the extract below) that the arrival of this prehistoric creature merely strengthens the tribals’ resolve to remain in their site of perennial starvation at the risk of extinction?

[Shankar] looks around and says, ‘Why should we leave? Isn’t this our place? Now no tribal will leave. The ancestors’ soul let us know that all the places it visited are ours. Can anyone leave anymore, or will they leave?’

[...]

Puran shakes and shakes his head. They will not leave, they will not go anywhere leaving those stones, hills, caves, and river. To the fertile fields, to the plains, where there is plenty of water, and many supports for survival.

— If they want to give us aid, let them give it to us here.

Spreading his arms, [Shankar] says, ‘All this land was ours, the kings took it from us. They were supposed to return it to us, to whom did they give it back? No, we won’t go anywhere. Let them give us our dues here.’

— OK.

— If not let them forget, let them forget us. At most we’ll die, nothing worse can happen.

(p. 194)

The question of whether the pterodactyl is real or unreal, material or immaterial, is ultimately left open, as we can see from Puran’s wondering about Bikhia’s practice of a traditional funeral rite for the creature:

Bikhia, the only discover of the embodied ancestral soul, gives everyone oil from a small bowl at the point of a twig in a ceremonial way.

Why does this boy observe the same rule in the matter of the form of the ancestral soul as is appropriate to the funeral rites of the formerly living? No one asks this question.

Did he see its death?

No questions asked.

Did he cremate or bury it?

No questions asked.

But the flow of excitement travels like a current of electricity.

(pp. 192-93)

As the extract above implies, that Devi does not show us the actual burial or cremation of the pterodactyl also keeps the creature's corporeality in question. Yet the 'flow of excitement' that 'travels like a current of electricity' throughout Pirtha's tribal community suggests that the tribals experience the pterodactyl as real and material, wherein the creature offers an alternative source of energy for them to resist their exploitation.

Yet how can we understand the pterodactyl as an alternative source of energy for tribal resistance when its bodily form is dying or decomposing in the shrine room? Here, we can turn back to Devi's depiction of the wasted, skeletal tribal bodies and their rotting mouths that, as I have argued earlier, are kinaesthetic registrations of the exploitative energy depletion and extraction practices underlying contemporary globalised development. In her long story, Devi shows notable similarities in the physical characteristics of the malnourished tribals and those of the pterodactyl. The pterodactyl is described as 'The being whose wings are webbed like a bat's, body like a gigantic iguana, four clawed feet, no teeth in that yawning terrible mouth' (pp. 127-128). This last emphasis on the pterodactyl's lack of teeth reminds us of the tribals' hunger and powerlessness amid these exploitative forces, in that they lack the 'bite' (p. 170) that Harisharan exhorts Puran to keep in his journalistic report on the tribals' plight. We are told of the scent of the pterodactyl: 'The shrine room is full of an animal smell, a smell of flesh. This is an unknown carnal smell.' (p. 154) The pterodactyl's scent is reminiscent of the earlier mentioned 'strange mixed smell' of the old tribal woman who collapsed in Puran's arms. Finally, going under the rotting flesh of the tribals and the pterodactyl, we can unearth the skeletal forms of these decomposing bodies that are already visible due to their malnourishment. Just as the tribals' skeletal bodies reveal their energy depletion, the pterodactyl itself is, after all, an extinct animal whose fossilised remains form

the basis of energy extraction in the developed world's dependence on fossil fuels.

But it is here that Devi kinaesthetically presents the fossilisation process of the pterodactyl's bodily form to show how it can be an alternative source of energy for tribal resistance. She suggests that the preserved bones of these decomposing bodies of the tribals and the pterodactyl can be recognised as material sources of energy in themselves. After all, the bones are the parts of the body that do not rot as quickly as flesh, forming the basic mould of a fossil when the skeleton of a dead animal is buried in sediment over time. To analyse the tribals' skeletal structure *alongside* their rotting flesh, then, is not to spectralise them as ghostly presences. Rather, it is to understand in corporeal terms the dynamics of how these bones of the tribal bodies emerge in relation to their exploitation.

In her analysis of American artist Eleanor Antin's performance piece *Carving: A Traditional Sculpture* (1981-82), Kirshenblatt-Gimblett notes that the starving body is one that allows the body to become its own food.¹²³ Two kinds of phenomena occur during this process of starvation: firstly, the form emerges from inside the flesh, just as a sculpture emerges from inside the marble, in a continuous layer across the entire surface¹²⁴; and secondly, the body that dines on itself changes its shape and gets smaller, incrementally¹²⁵.

We have already seen the second phenomenon manifesting in the tribals' stunted growth. The first phenomenon also shows how, as the starving body is made to feed upon itself, its skeleton emerges as a sign of the premature expiration of this body. At the same time, remembering the physical similarities that Devi renders between the tribals and the pterodactyl, as well as their energetic association, the emerging skeletal structures of the tribal bodies can also be understood as kinaesthetic registrations of the fossilisation process, whereby often after death, the hard parts of animals—shell, bone, teeth—are preserved as fossils.

In this sense, the tribals' refusal to leave their 'Rough and dry' (p. 101) lands—even in the knowledge that they will die out there—'preserves' their

¹²³ Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, p. 6.

¹²⁴ Eleanor Antin, 'Carving: a traditional sculpture', *High Performance*, 4.4 (1981-82), 62 (p. 62). Cited in Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, p. 6.

¹²⁵ Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, p. 6.

skeletal bodies as fossils, that is, as bodies that express their own particular, lived experiences being marginalised as an anachronism in modern India, and that refuse to let modern India forget its depletion and ‘underdevelopment’ of these bodies as it exploits their energy. The manifestation of the pterodactyl also strengthens the tribals’ resolve to stay and resist such exploitation. By staying on their lands instead of leaving, the tribals modify their bodily behaviour and make their bodies ‘turn into stone’—a practice that is mindful of the reciprocal and regenerative relationship between humans and nature. In doing so, they resist global determination of their bodies as ‘human resources’ and modify their own bodies into fossils or rather, as the ‘bedrock’ of India’s civilisational history (p. 114). This reflects the ‘motor intentionality’ of the tribals’ bodies and their resistance practices.

Finally, the fact that a pterodactyl manifests in relation to the tribals’ act of staying on their lands suggests that, for Devi, embodied resistance as enacted by people facing extinction has mythic effects that can draw attention to the plight of those under threat. In this sense, the pterodactyl signifies that the tribals’ bodily practices have produced ‘a somatic mode of attention’¹²⁶ that alerts others to the qualities of their acts, in this case the exploitative practices underlying neo-colonial development of India in the contemporary era. Indeed, we see that Puran, the modern global citizen who leaves his urban centre because of the pterodactyl, is now alerted to the tribals’ marginalised and endangered state in a way that is experienced within his own body: ‘Now Puran’s amazed heart discovers what love for Pirtha there is in his heart, perhaps he cannot remain a distant spectator anywhere in life.’ (p. 196) While the results of Puran’s efforts to help the tribals are indeterminate, Devi suggests that it is just as important to recognise the motor intentionality underlying such acts of tribal agency. This would recognise such bodies—even as they are so marginalised and exploited of its energy as to be near extinction—as actively regenerating their own energies through their reciprocal practices with nature towards political resistance.

¹²⁶ Noland, p. 6.

CONCLUSION

In this chapter, we have seen that the recycling practices of tribal people and shantytown dwellers in Mahasweta Devi's long story 'Pterodactyl, Puran Sahay, and Pirtha' and Patrick Chamoiseau's novel *Texaco* signify practices of resistance that account for lived experiences of globalisation at different local cultural sites. I have argued that Devi's and Chamoiseau's representations of these recycling practices are attentive to bodily kinaesthesia—how sentient bodies move and engage with the world through a form of 'corporeal consciousness' that informs their lived experiences of globalisation. I have also shown that, through the examination of these recycling practices, these marginalised bodies resist global homogenising forces of neo-colonial development. Devi and Chamoiseau show that global neo-colonial development practices are undercut by an exploitative mode of interaction between humans and nature, which develop certain bodies into 'human resources'—prematurely depleting their energies—while developing natural resources from the ecological environment.

Both texts show how these recycling practices of resistance are enacted at the local sites of India and Martinique. In *Texaco*, Caribbean shantytown dweller Marie-Sophie's movements of salvaging resource materials to build her shantytown at the beach—the 'contact zone' where bodies around the world are drifted in, wasted, and dislocated for the development of the elite City—resist the historical exploitation of her body and its energy as 'human resource' as well as ecological depletion. This is because these recycling practices reflect Marie-Sophie's modification of the bodily behaviour of the drifter—a figure who represents the African slave who was historically oppressed and exploited in the Americas under colonial development. In recognising the reciprocal and regenerative relationship between humans and nature, Marie-Sophie's practices of salvage kinaesthetically resist the exploitative 'development' of nature into resource to produce energy for human consumption. The ecological diversity of the shantytown testifies to this sensibility which, in turn, reflects the lived experiences of these people who have now settled in the Caribbean as a Creole community and who have to invent new cultural designs that allow them to cohabit with one another.

Chamoiseau subsequently shows that these alternative practices of development that these people enact to resist their global exploitation have political effects. Beyond their practices of salvage, Marie-Sophie and her fellow shantytown dwellers ‘plant’ their bodies on the coasts of Martinique to put an organised resistance into motion—one that ultimately manages to chase away the transnational companies’ oil tankers and to reinvent local laws of development that in turn transform her lived experience of a globalising world into one that is physically and ecologically sustainable. This act of ‘planting’ or anchoring her body, then, shows another instance where Marie-Sophie modifies the bodily behaviour of drifting or marronage in order resist ways in which local bodies are treated as energy resources that are exploited by an elite global class.

In ‘Pterodactyl’, we have seen that the Indian tribals have been malnourished and poisoned in their locality of Pirtha as resources are distributed unevenly on a local and global scale. Treated as an anachronism of modern India—as people that the Indian government and industrialists would rather forget—they are exploited by these parties under neo-colonialism as ‘human resources’, as their lands and agricultural produce are co-opted and they themselves become the subjects of documentaries to attract foreign investment. Devi represents these exploitative practices through bodily kinaesthesia as we see that in the process, these tribals have their bodily energies depleted to the point of exhaustion, having skeletal and wasted flesh.

As the tribals exhibit such weak physical conditions and precarious states of existence, it might be difficult to recognise how they have agency and are enacting resistance against their exploitation under globalised neo-colonial development. But in her long story, Devi shows that tribal resistance is possible by presenting the physical manifestation of the tribal ancestral spirit in the form of a live pterodactyl. We can understand this pterodactyl as manifesting from the tribals’ kinaesthetic practices of repurposing natural resources such as stone—unique practices of development borne from local tribal knowledge and that are thus suggestive of ‘autonomous development’, whereby the tribals define their own needs and plan and implement actions that help them achieve economic independence by using resources in a way that is appropriate to ensuring its continuity. The manifestation of the pterodactyl ultimately signifies the tribals’ expression of their particular, lived experiences of being marginalised in a

globalising world, as well as their refusal to let modern India forget its premature depletion of energy from and ‘underdevelopment’ of these bodies. This involves the tribals modifying their bodily behaviour whereby they intentionally stay on their lands instead of leaving, making their bodies ‘turn into stone’—a practice that is mindful of the reciprocal and regenerative relationship between humans and nature. While the results of this tribal resistance are indeterminate, they do have positive effects as they alert Puran, the modern global citizen, as to the tribals’ plight—something that he experiences in his body—and he is incited to action. Yet for us to recognise these effects, Devi emphasises the importance of understanding the tribals as active agents who are engaged in their own local practices of resistance, which she brings to light by kinaesthetically representing these practices through the body-as-energy.

These two practices of resistance as shown in the texts exemplify how people who are marginalised under neo-colonial development enact motor decisions through their bodies that have motor intentionality. By rendering the lived experience of marginalisation and of resistance in kinaesthetic terms, specifically presenting the body as energy resource, Devi and Chamoiseau show the resourcefulness and adaptability of marginalised peoples. That is to say, these peoples resist physical exploitation with bodily-kinaesthetic intelligence, energetically ‘reviving’ themselves despite existing in endangered states. We have also seen that such bodily practices have mythic effects, as other sources of energy that might be considered otherworldly are manifested for resistance. As the resistance practices of these marginalised peoples have begun to incite others towards sociopolitical activism, these practices ultimately invite others to effect change. This sense of motor intentionality and resistance as a practice of renewing one’s bodily energies thus develops the previous chapter’s understanding of resistance for greater relevance in the context of neo-colonial development.

6

Conclusion

In this thesis, I have examined literary representations of kinaesthetic resistance in the contemporary era of globalisation. The concept of bodily kinaesthesia refers to a body that is sentient and that moves and engages with the world through a form of corporeal consciousness—a ‘thinking’ body that offers us a sense of how bodies are lived. Through four chapters, and in a developing sequence, I have considered how marginalised peoples from different cultural sites and contexts resist the negative effects and political consequences of globalising processes that enforce cultural homogenisation and economic exploitation. Ultimately, I have shown that, when we consider these resistance practices in sequence in terms of the kinaesthetic body—the *resisting body through kinaesthesia*—we can understand the body as a conflicted site: it is shaped by globalisation, but it also resists the political consequences of such globalisation, sometimes in extraordinary ways.

We arrive at this sense of the body as a conflicted site by following the body’s lived experiences of resistance against marginalisation. These experiences range from hunger to the erotic to that of violence, from violence to tactile mediation to that of being instrumentalised, from instrumentalisation to machinic symbiosis to being exploited, and finally from exploitation to being energised.

In the second chapter ‘Eating Bodies’, we have seen that women whose sexual desires are silenced and suppressed under globalised heteronormativity resist such suppression through their bodies. In Jamaica Kincaid’s novel *Lucy* and Han Kang’s novel *The Vegetarian*, the experiences of marginalisation and of resistance are represented in terms of bodily kinaesthesia, as their female protagonists are portrayed as hungry women who resist their ‘starvation’ under heteronormativity by ‘eating’ the bodies of their sexual partners to ‘feed’ themselves. Flesh is thus rendered as a kind of food that provides erotic

nourishment, and these practices of resistance demonstrate the modification of bodily behaviour which I have termed ‘motor decisions’ that reflect ‘motor intentionality’.

Specifically, we have seen that understanding the flesh as food that provides erotic nourishment—which both female protagonists experience in their bodies as sensual pleasure—enables us to understand their activities as examples of their agency and resistance, rather than as being co-opted under titillation and pornography. The women’s sensual pleasure is shown to inform them as to the ‘qualities’ of their non-heteronormative sexual desires—what they are ‘hungry’ for and how they can ‘nourish’ themselves, even as they are imbricated within pornography. In other words, through bodily-kinaesthetic intelligence, they gain erotic understanding and self-knowledge of one’s own cravings or needs, as well as knowing how to feed those cravings in a way that satisfies oneself. In turn, these qualities invite subjects to effect change. The female protagonists’ sensual pleasure enables other women around them to be awakened to their own non-heteronormative sexual desires.

Yet these activities of ‘eating’ and biting into the flesh as food leave visible marks on the body. We began to see this near the end of the second chapter. Both authors’ female protagonists bore body scars and birthmarks—corporeal markings that were also associated with violence, particularly in relation to wartime militarism. Indeed, starvation was a form of violence that not only silenced bodies, but also marked bodies visibly. Moreover, both female protagonists’ naked bodies were shown as becoming the subjects of photographs and video art. This recalled how their sexual activities were violently imbricated with pornography through media representation.

These various factors suggested the need to develop our understanding of how resistance could be enacted in the context of war in the contemporary era. War was now conducted in an increasingly mediatised world, and the media could be weaponised in quicker and more agile ways in relation to the representation of the experiences of war participants. This would, in turn, affect the outcome of war. The third chapter ‘Treating Skins’ has examined this through readings of Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie’s novel *Half of a Yellow Sun* and Haruki Murakami’s novel *The Wind-Up Bird Chronicle*. It has shown that citizen soldiers from Biafra and Japan resist negative global media

representations of their experiences of war—the 1967 Nigeria-Biafra war and the Japanese neo-nationalist reproduction of the 1941 Asia-Pacific war respectively—through their bodies. Adichie and Murakami represented these experiences of marginalisation and of resistance through bodily kinaesthesia. They showed these citizen soldiers as resisting their ‘invisibility’ within the global media ecology by manipulating their bodies—specifically their skins—in conjunction to media images of their bodies in certain ways. Such manipulation practices, which I have termed ‘treatments’, would enable them to become ‘visible’ and seen in the global mediascape once more and on their own terms. The skin is thus rendered as an interface between the body and the world. These practices of resistance are ‘motor decisions’ that demonstrate the modification of bodily behaviour with the intention to effect change.

Specifically, we have seen that these acts of modifying bodily behaviour are qualitative examples of the ability and agility of marginalised peoples to resist certain formal representations of their war experience in global media, and to reconstruct these media representations so as to assert their own experiences of war as they have lived it. This agility has exemplified bodily-kinaesthetic intelligence of the mediated body, particularly in relation to its skin. In turn, through their resistance practices, these people have begun to mobilise others to interpret war in alternative ways rather than to accept an official account that suppresses certain lived experiences. This is a reflection of how movement qualities could invite subjects to effect change.

Considering the mediated body by way of thinking of the skin as an ‘interface’, our attention has been drawn to the body’s role in the haptic technologies—the technologies of touch—that increasingly shape our world today. The increasing presence of artificially intelligent technologies that we co-exist with, even within the global media ecology, has meant that we inhabit more ‘lively’ environments. This has also meant that our bodily sense of relating to technology or to our tools have changed so radically such that we should consider ourselves as posthuman cyborgs, a hybrid of machine and organism. We began to get a sense of such cyborgian bodies in relation to war by the end of the third chapter, through Murakami’s portrayal of a Japanese soldier with prosthetic skin, as well as his vision of modern technologised Japan being run by cyborgian citizen soldiers. Rendered unstable under the tools of war, these war-torn bodies

have now been rebuilt or re-engineered under technologised globalisation to become more reliable in their functions. But in the course of techno-utopian practices, certain bodies have been instrumentalised and marginalised. These factors have suggested the need to develop our understanding of how resistance could be enacted in the context of a techno-utopian world, where technology has been assumed to be reliable in never failing provide all-encompassing solutions that could resolve existing inequalities in the global political economy.

The fourth chapter 'Bodies of Unreliability' has done this through readings of Philip K. Dick's novel *Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep?* and Kazuo Ishiguro's novel *Never Let Me Go*, as well as a brief analysis of Ridley Scott's film adaptation of Dick's novel, *Blade Runner*. We have seen that posthuman intelligent beings that are trapped within the global political economy—as their bodies are relentlessly 'engineered' to become more reliable in their performance for the building of techno-utopia—resist their marginalisation through their bodies. These experiences of marginalisation and of resistance are represented in terms of bodily kinaesthesia, as these cyborgs—in the forms of the android and the clone—are shown to be hunting, stalking, and shadowing their human counterparts when they are not supposed to. That is to say, they are not 'engineered' or 'made' for this purpose, thus demonstrating bodily behaviour that is unreliable.

Indeed, these cyborgs engage in specific bodily practices that enable their unreliable behaviour. They go on strike, repair their bodies, and construct cybernetic memories. This reflects an understanding of the body as *techne*, that is, as bodies-in-process that reflect our dynamic coupling or conjoining with our tools such that we are always bodies in the making rather than being ready-made. As these beings 'make' and 'unmake' their bodies to keep surviving within the system, their practices of resistance demonstrate the modification of bodily behaviour. Such acts of modifying bodily behaviour are qualitative examples of the bodily-kinaesthetic intelligence of posthuman intelligent beings to determine their own understanding of the organic-machinic relation that constructs them, instead of being inanimate instruments that merely perform as they are designed to. Correspondingly, this shift in understanding has signalled the beginning of how these resistance practices could invite subjects to effect change.

Yet by the end of the fourth chapter, we began to get a sense that the relentless engineering of posthuman intelligent beings through technological innovation placed many demands on their bodily energies to the point of no return. We saw that the androids and clones were physically exhausted and their bodies were breaking down and showing signs of being worn out. This reflected the intimate relationship between the technological machine and the resources—human and natural—that drive or energise it. We also saw that these beings were being exhausted at the expense of benefitting the elite, as they were made to be slaves. To this end, such technological development processes could also been seen as processes of colonisation that physically exploit and marginalise certain groups of people in society. These various factors suggested the need to develop our understanding of how resistance could be enacted in the context of neo-colonial development.

The fifth chapter ‘Energetic Bodies’ has done this through readings of Mahasweta Devi’s long story ‘Pterodactyl, Puran Sahay, and Pirtha’ and Patrick Chamoiseau’s novel *Texaco*. We have seen that tribal peoples in India and shantytown dwellers in Martinique who are physically exploited of their energies under neo-colonial development practices resist their exploitation through their bodies. The experiences of marginalisation and of resistance are represented in terms of bodily kinaesthesia. These marginalised peoples are portrayed as becoming physically wasted and dislocated under corrupt development practices that divert resources away from them and prematurely deplete their bodily energies. They resist such exploitation by repurposing resource materials in their ecological environment to generate energy for themselves. The body is thus understood as energy resource or supply. These practices of resistance are ‘motor decisions’ that demonstrate the modification of bodily behaviour with the intention to effect change.

Specifically, we have seen that these acts of modifying bodily behaviour are qualitative examples of the resourcefulness and adaptability of marginalised peoples. That is to say, these peoples resist physical exploitation with bodily-kinaesthetic intelligence, energetically ‘reviving’ themselves despite existing in endangered states. We have also seen that such bodily practices have mythic effects, as other sources of energy that might be considered otherworldly are manifested for resistance. As the resistance practices of these marginalised

peoples have begun to incite others towards sociopolitical activism, these practices ultimately invite others to effect change.

These bodily practices of resistance have had outcomes ranging from positive to negative, as well as outcomes that are uncertain, limited, and neutral. In positive terms, the erotic resistances of Lucy and Yeong-hye from the second chapter have induced the sexual awakening of other women around them whose non-heteronormative sexual desires were similarly suppressed, such that these women have begun to take action to change their unhappy circumstances. Yeong-hye's actions have also forced men who perpetuated heteronormativity to suffer from serious consequences where they lose their (sexual) freedom through criminal persecution and societal ostracisation. From the third chapter, the resistance of Toru—the 'loser' of modern Japan's internal war—has led to the toppling of his opponent, as well as finally affording an old ex-soldier a sense of peace despite his horrific war experiences. From the fifth chapter, Marie-Sophie's organised resistance has succeeded in driving away the oil tankers that perpetuate ecological and human exploitation, enabling her shantytown to co-exist with City. The manifestation of the pterodactyl has also begun to incite the modern Indian citizen Puran into activism for the oppressed Indian tribals.

Regarding uncertain, limited, or neutral outcomes, the resistance practices of Biafran citizen soldiers Madu and Ugwu from the second chapter have yet to show determinate outcomes as to whether they could change negative African stereotypes in global media that stem from mass perception of their war experiences. From the fourth chapter, Deckard's act of strike through sleeping came at the end of his 'marathon assignment' of killing androids, so we could not know whether this act would have significantly disrupted this or any technoutopia. From the fifth chapter, there were encouraging signs of the Indian tribals' autonomous development, but they have also remained deeply oppressed, showing a limited outcome from their resistance. A neutral outcome has been reflected in the example of the clone Kathy from the fourth chapter, whose material reality does not change as she remains destined to function as medical supply. But I have argued that this should be considered a neutral outcome because it was not Ishiguro's intention to fit Kathy's resistance into a certain idea of what resistance should be. Finally, one example of resistance has also been shown to involve serious costs, which might be considered a negative outcome.

This is the fact that Yeong-hye was incarcerated in a psychiatric facility for her non-heteronormative behaviour.

The varied effectiveness of these different resistance practices indicates that resistance should not be judged solely on its outcome, but needs to be considered in relation to its context. By judging whether an act is resistance or not, resistance is treated as a binary. But to follow Erynn Masi de Casanova and Afshan Jahar, it is important to acknowledge the complexity of resisting social and political control at, with, and through the body.¹ Embodied actions may contain elements of both accommodation and resistance, these actions may be read differently in different contexts, and what feels liberating for one individual may not lead to more widespread resistance or change.²

This thesis has shown that bodily-kinaesthetic intelligence is valuable in further illuminating the complexity of resisting social and political control at, with, and through the body under globalisation in various cultural contexts. By affording us a qualitative understanding of resistance, bodily-kinaesthetic intelligence enables us to recognise the ‘motor intentionality’ of marginalised peoples. That is to say, we can recognise their ways of making decisions with and through their bodies and bodily practices even if, from the outset, it might not seem like they are doing anything or that they have been rendered utterly powerless. For just as marginalisation is experienced through and acted upon bodies in our somatic society, bodies themselves also have intelligence and intentionality to act against sociopolitical controls—this goes back to the instinct for survival. Bodily-kinaesthetic intelligence reveals the resisting body as mindful, that corporeally and consciously works through its own experience of cultural conditioning and works out its own solutions for its own emancipation.

Yet as we ‘read’ different enactments of bodily-kinaesthetic intelligence in relation to resistance, we also need to release our expectations of what outcomes should come about. In doing so, we are ultimately shown creative and unexpected methods to combat existing problems, by people peremptorily deemed ‘powerless’. These are methods that bodily-kinaesthetic intelligence gives us insight to, and that could lead to new sociopolitical possibilities.

¹ Erynn Masi de Casanova and Afshan Jafar, ‘The Body as a Site of Resistance’, in *The SAGE Handbook of Resistance*, ed. by David Courpasson and Steven Vallas (London: SAGE Publications, 2016), pp. 139-155 (p. 140).

² *Ibid.*, pp. 140-41.

Through the ‘testimonies’ provided by contemporary literary texts, the thesis has also shown these creative methods as being conducted at various cultural localities—the Caribbean, South Korea, Nigeria, Japan, the U.S., the U.K., and India—against global forces. That is to say, we have seen that certain people’s particular, lived experiences are mindfully asserted at the level of the local against globalising processes of cultural homogenisation that attempt to universalise these experiences. This observation takes the local and global as referring to opposite modes of integration, whereby the local is delineated by social integration, i.e. face-to-face interaction or interaction between individuals physically co-present, and the global is a function of system integration or interaction between individuals away from each other in time or space or both.³ In other words, this thesis has shown that contemporary literature offers us an intimate understanding of the negative impact of cultural homogenisation as a mode of integrating individuals who are away from each other in time and/or space—which globalisation works from. Contemporary literature also enables us to understand that individuals who suffer under this negative impact counteract with bodily-kinaesthetic intelligence to assert their particular experiences of the world. The mindfulness with which these individuals enact their resistance through their bodies, then, takes reference from a different sense of social integration—that which is experienced ‘locally’, between interacting individuals who are physically co-present. This follows the realisation that contemporary literature bears witness to the resistance of the local against the global in terms of bodily kinaesthesia, through which cultural heterogeneity begins to be produced, so as to counteract the negative impact of globalisation as a process of cultural homogenisation, and to effect change.

INTERVENTIONS AND FUTURE WORK

This thesis’s understanding of contemporary literature as testifying to the kinaesthetic body under globalisation as a conflicted site—being shaped by globalisation but also resisting it—as well as being a local-global nexus where

³ Jean-Sébastien Guy, ‘What is Global and What is Local? A Theoretical Discussion Around Globalization’, *Parsons Journal for Information Mapping*, 1.2 (2009), 1-16 (p. 1).

cultural heterogeneity is produced, has intervened in various intellectual debates in the field of literary studies. I will address them below.

(a) The body in contemporary literature and its represented experience of globalisation

The thesis has contributed to existing research on the body in the field of contemporary literature. Regarding the body under globalisation specifically, it has elaborated partial studies like Svend Erik Larsen's, who considers the body as a local-global nexus only in two novels—South African writer Athol Fugard's *Tsotsi* (1980) and Afghan-French writer Atiq Rahimi's *Earth and Ashes* (1999)—and who works with a different understanding of the body.⁴ It has added to existing contemporary literary research on the bodies of Caribbean and South Korean women, of Biafran citizen soldiers and modern Japanese precariat, on posthuman bodies, and of Indian tribals and Caribbean squatters.

The thesis has contributed to contemporary literary research in relation to several topics, including how they pertain to globalisation: sexual politics in heteronormativity, media and war, technology, ecological development, neo-colonialism, capitalism and the nation-state, Créolité and creolisation, and marronage in the Black Atlantic.

The thesis has also intervened in the field of contemporary literature with regard to questions about contemporary literature's engagement with the lived experience of globalisation, at local and global levels, and resistance against it. Its intervention includes a burgeoning engagement with the aesthetics of representation in contemporary literature, particularly in the context of globalisation and when considering literature as a form of testimony. The thesis's focus on contemporary literary representations of the resisting, kinaesthetic body intervenes where other literary discussions about resistance against globalisation remain tied to narrative and imagination. The latter can be seen in Liam Connell's work, for instance, where he considers how globalisation as a discourse can be resisted through readings of contemporary literary texts such as Nuruddin Farah's *Gifts* (1992) and J. M. Coetzee's *Youth* (2002), and James

⁴ Svend Erik Larsen, *Literature and the Experience of Globalization: Texts Without Borders*, trans. by John Irons (London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2017).

Annesley's research into the 'fictions' of globalisation that are embedded in the narrative structures of contemporary American fiction.⁵ As mentioned in the introductory chapter, scholars like Nico Israel and Suman Gupta's understanding of the relationship between globalisation and the form of contemporary literature is closer to my own, as they examine contemporary literature's representation of lived *experiences* of a globalising world in relation to fashion, anti-globalisation protests, and cosmopolitan citizenship.⁶ But their approaches either do not focus on the body as the primary actor, or they do so only to a limited degree. In considering the kinaesthetic body and its resistance practices in different globalisation and cultural contexts in contemporary literature, the thesis has ultimately offered another way to elaborate the tripartite relationship between literature, globalisation, and contemporaneity.

(b) Towards world literature via Pascale Casanova's 'World Republic of Letters'

The thesis has also begun to bridge the fields of contemporary literature and world literature. As mentioned in the introductory chapter, I have selected my texts with the sense that they have shaped literary contemporaneity. This sense of literary contemporaneity follows Pascale Casanova's proposal of an international literary space within which literary texts circulate, and which has its own present—a literary Greenwich meridian.⁷ The texts on which I have placed my primary focus have 'made their mark' in contemporary global consciousness through struggle—crystallising, contesting, and elaborating this literary 'present'.⁸ They have made their mark because they are shown to be 'capable of modifying the current aesthetic norms'.⁹

My readings of these literary texts have also worked from the recognition that the text can evoke the presence of living, antagonistic bodies, whence my use of the term 'kinaesthetic bodies'. The thesis has thus begun to expand on

⁵ Unsurprisingly, Connell's sense of how the novels' characters exist within global scapes and imagined worlds take reference from Arjun Appadurai. Liam Connell, 'Global Narratives: Globalisation and Literary Studies', *Critical Survey*, 16.2 (2004), 78-95; James Annesley, *Fictions of Globalization* (London and New York: Continuum, 2006).

⁶ Nico Israel, 'Globalization and Contemporary Literature', *Literature Compass*, 1.1 (2004), 1-5; Suman Gupta, *Globalization and Literature* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2009).

⁷ Pascale Casanova, *The World Republic of Letters*, trans. by M. B. DeBevoise (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2004), p. xii.

⁸ Pascale Casanova, 'Literature as a World', *New Left Review*, 31 (2005), 71-90 (p. 75).

⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 75.

Casanova's point about contemporary literature's capability to 'modify the current aesthetic norms'. As the thesis has also mapped the various ways in which marginalised people from all over the world mindfully resist globalisation in its different contexts, as represented in literature, it has begun to elaborate Casanova's world literary model—the 'world republic of letters'—in relation to aesthetics, resistance, and power relations in the international literary space. I have not been able to probe further into this topic in this thesis due to space constraints, but am interested in developing my future research in this direction.

(c) Aesthetics of representation and affectivity of contemporary literature in relation to creative practices and the reader-critic

Considering that my methodology is informed by bodily kinaesthesia, the thesis has also begun to contribute to literary research on the link between the aesthetics of representation and the author's creative practices. As mentioned in the Introduction, one reason for my reading written literary texts as 'rhythmic art'—as performance and event—stems from the authors' own voiced interests about representing bodies on their own dynamic terms in their works. Parts of this thesis have begun to interrogate the connection between the bodily dynamics of the creative process and literary kinaesthetics. For instance, in Adichie's novel, Ugwu's 'treatment' of the facial skins of Biafran babies in his book—which he writes as his own skin heals—attempts to capture the material reality of the suffering he sees around him. In *The Vegetarian*, the artist's 'treatment' of Yeong-hye's skin by painting flowers on it as if it were a canvas and filming this process as part of his video art are also linked with the latter's vegetarianism and sexual satiation. On a related note, the thesis has also elaborated on the unreliable narrator in terms of bodily kinaesthesia. The thesis has thus begun to offer another way of understanding the aesthetics of representation in literature in relation to the body, and in connection to creative practices and narratology, that goes beyond existing concepts such as hapticity and ekphrasis.

The thesis has also begun to intervene in literary research on the relationship between the reader and the text, by way of reading the written text as performance and event. As indicated in the Introduction, bodily-kinaesthetic

intelligence also involves ‘kinesthetic resonance’, where the sensations of movement that dancers feel help with learning to dance, even just by watching others move. Considering the affective dimension of bodily kinaesthesia with regard to the practice of reading and of literary analysis is beyond the scope of this thesis, but could be suggestive for research fields such as reader-response theory. Additionally, with its analyses of other media forms (a play, a film, and an art installation) alongside the written literary text, the thesis has begun to intervene in research that is similarly interested in stretching and testing concepts such as literary authorship, readership, and textuality in new, interdisciplinary ways in the contemporary era of globalisation.¹¹

¹¹ Examples of such research include Gupta’s analyses of the reading practices of internet novels and Connell’s examination of the thematisation of globalisation in contemporary experimental fiction. Gupta, pp. 54-61; Liam Connell, ‘Globalization and Transnationalism’, in *The Routledge Companion to Experimental Literature*, ed. by Joe Bray, Alison Gibbons and Brian McHale (London and New York: Routledge, 2012), pp. 224-37.

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